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ABSTRACT

These Congressional hearings contain testimony pertaining to the passage of the Community Volunteer Service Act of 1983. This bill would amend the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program to provide a more concrete mandate for the program; would have VISTA volunteers recruited locally and assigned to projects to alleviate poverty and poverty-related problems in their own communities; and would allow volunteers to make part-time, as well as full-time, commitments to the program. Included among the agencies and organizations represented at the hearing were the following: the American Association of Retired Persons, the National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors, the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, the ACTION Agency, the National Association of Senior Companion Project Directors, the National Association of RSVP Program Directors, and the Connecticut Department of Corrections. Also included in the hearings is the text of an article entitled "Senior Companions: The Unrecognized Resource for Long Term Care." (MN)

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S. HRG. 98-308

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT OF 1983

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

S. 1129

TO AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATIONS FOR PROGRAMS UNDER THE DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT OF 1973, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

APRIL 22, 1983

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COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT OF 1983

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 1983

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES,
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 10:12 a.m., in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Jeremiah Denton (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senator Denton.

Staff present: Nabers Cabaniss, staff director; Juanita Donaghey, professional staff member; and Ronald Hunt, clerk.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DENTON

Senator DENTON. Good morning. This hearing will come to order.

I want to welcome you all on this beautiful day. I hope we can conduct a complete but expeditious hearing. I have a little flu and a bad throat so I will not be as distinct as usual. I look forward to this hearing very much. We will be hearing testimony on the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

Yesterday, Senator Hatch and I introduced S. 1129, a bill to reauthorize the act as part of a voluntarism initiative that provides a focal point for volunteer activity under the ACTION Agency.

I, Senator Hatch, and 25 of our colleagues also introduced Senate Joint Resolution 88, a bill to designate 1984 as the National Year of Voluntarism. I am confident that action can be taken in both Houses on the new bill before the end of this year.

It is appropriate during National Volunteer Week that the subcommittee turn its attention to voluntarism. President Reagan proclaimed the week of April 17 to 23 to be National Volunteer Week in order to recognize the efforts of the millions of Americans who devote their time and energy to helping their less fortunate compatriots. National Volunteer Week should remind us that our Nation was built on the efforts of individuals working together in the common struggle for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The programs under the authority of the ACTION Agency represent the Federal Government's commitment to volunteer activity. They are some of the most important of all Federal programs. I believe that the Older Americans volunteer programs incorporate the best of both worlds: A great benefit from a relatively low investment of Federal money, and local determination, administration, and support. Programs such as those eliminate the need for a big bureaucracy and, therefore, they give the community big results.

RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions are models of voluntarism at its very best.

It is for those reasons that I support the provision in the Hatch-Denton reauthorization bill to add a home health component to the Senior Companion program. The Senior Companion volunteers have a great potential for helping frail elderly people remain in their homes. Although many families would love to care for older family members in the home, the financial and emotional burdens are often overwhelming. Allowing Senior Companions to perform home health care can help to ease the burden for families who do not wish to institutionalize elderly relatives.

S. 1129 amends the VISTA program to provide a more concrete mandate for the program.

Under the amendments, VISTA volunteers will be locally recruited and assigned to projects in order to alleviate poverty and poverty-related human problems. Local community sponsors have complained that nationally recruited volunteers are often unfamiliar with the particular problems of the area to which they are assigned. Too often, well-intentioned volunteers have worked to impose an ill-suited solution on a community when, in actuality, community leaders know best what the problems are and how they can be solved. I feel certain that the change will give local sponsors a greater degree of freedom to use its volunteers. The amendments also allow volunteers to make a part-time, as well as full-time, commitment to the program.

Our distinguished witnesses will discuss their involvement with ACTION's programs and give us their views on how the programs may be improved. Our first witness is my friend, the Director of the Agency, the Honorable Tom Pauken. I would like to compliment you, Mr. Pauken, on your initiatives to promote voluntarism. Some of the most successful programs under your Agency are new and developed through your ideas, such as young volunteers in action and the Vietnam veterans leadership program.

I join many who have admired your work.

I must say to all of our witnesses this morning that we are operating under time constraints and we would appreciate it if you would summarize your statements which will be entered into the hearing record in full.

I and other members of the subcommittee may submit written questions to be answered by the witnesses within 10 days of receipt.

I want to welcome again the Honorable Tom Pauken and the three assistants he has brought with him and ask you, Mr. Pauken, if you would care to begin your testimony.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS PAUKEN, DIRECTOR, ACTION AGENCY, ACCOMPANIED BY LOWELL GENEBACH, BUDGET DIRECTOR, BETTY BRAKE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, AND DR. MARK BLITZ, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, POLICY AND PLANNING

Mr. PAUKEN. Thank you, Senator.

First, I would like to introduce, to my immediate left, Betty Brake, who is the Deputy Director of the ACTION Agency and was previously the Director of the Older American volunteer programs.

To my immediate right is Lowell Genebach, the Budget Director of the Agency, and to his immediate right, Dr. Mark Blitz, who is the Assistant Director of ACTION for policy and planning.

I would ask that my testimony be submitted to the record in full, copies have already been provided to the subcommittee.

Senator DENTON. The complete statement as written will be inserted in the record without objection.

Mr. PAUKEN. Given the time constraints, the fact that there are an extensive number of witnesses this morning and other factors, I will try to limit my remarks to a very brief summary of matters that we have gone over. In fact, a year ago today, I was here in this room testifying before this subcommittee on voluntarism in general and some of the voluntarism initiatives. I know from the Senator's strong support for the Older American volunteer programs and the comments in your opening remarks which I would echo myself, that you believe that these programs are excellent examples of public-private partnerships and of older Americans as productive citizens using wisdom and talent and experience in very effective ways to help people in need in our society.

I would add that the movement in this committee, and in general, toward encouraging people to be able to stay in their homes rather than to be forced into institutionalized care is, I think, an important development. It makes sense, not just economically but, even more importantly, socially to the elderly population which comes from a variety of economic backgrounds, and prefers understandably, to stay in their own home or apartment. They do not want to be forced into institutionalized care. So we look forward to working with your committee based upon some of the experience that ACTION has had on developing and expanding this idea of encouraging people to be able to stay in their homes.

In addition, I think one of the interesting phenomenon of this Agency in the past 2 years is that with very limited discretionary funds we have been able to set up some new initiatives that have been, I think, applauded on both sides of the aisle and have been successful in making the difference in people's lives.

Senator, you referred to the Vietnam veterans leadership program which is now in more than 40 communities around the country and has brought together successfully those Vietnam veterans to help change the false image of those veterans; that negative stereotype which has been in our land for so long, the program has also helped a tremendous number of Vietnam veterans who are less successful and who need assistance both in underemployment and unemployment, and in a variety of other ways. So I think it has been a very successful low cost program.

The same is true with regard to Young Volunteers in ACTION [YVA], which is now in some 75 communities throughout the United States. Again the program operates with small seed money grants, and is only designed to last for a couple of years, but it is making a positive difference by involving high school and college age young people in volunteer work. In addition to that, with a little bit of seed money, we were able to allow an outstanding runaway program such as Covenant House in New York to expand into other areas of the United States; they will be opening a major

runaway center in Houston, Tex., shortly. I believe they are looking at Philadelphia and Boston for the immediate future.

Again a little bit of Federal seed money, combined with significant private resources, is making a difference.

In New England, every pharmacy in the New England region has up-to-date information targeted at young people on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Michael Landon is the chief spokesman for the program, called pharmacists against drug abuse. We have been very pleased once again that a small amount of Federal support has encouraged a significant expansion of providing up-to-date information to parents and youngsters about the dangers of drugs and alcohol use.

In addition, we have supported the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth, as well as Pride, a national toll free number on how to get information on the dangers of drug abuse, and the American Council on Marijuana which publishes up-to-date scientific and technical information on the dangers of drug abuse. These kind of initiatives, with the small discretion that we have had, have helped make a difference. In the area of literacy, we are working with Literacy Volunteers of America, in laubach in an effort to try to encourage the expansion of public-private cooperative efforts there. I know that we have discussed in previous testimony the ACTION programs so I will not, given the constraints of time, go into any greater detail. But I do believe, as you pointed out, that the importance of volunteerism in our society in providing the support to encourage the productive utilization of older Americans makes a positive difference in making America a good society.

Thank you, Senator. I will be happy to respond to any questions that you may have.

Senator DENTON. Thank you, Mr. Pauken.

Beyond these questions, which we will offer orally, there may be some written questions which we will ask you and other witnesses when upon receiving them to answer them in writing within 10 days after receiving them.

Mr. PAUKEN. Fine.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pauken and responses to questions asked follow:]

Testimony of Thomas W. Pauken
Director of ACTION
Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources
Subcommittee on Family and Human Services
April 22, 1983

Mr. Chairman, I am here today to discuss the DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1983 for ACTION, the national agency mandated by Congress to support the work of 400,000 volunteers throughout America. ACTION, under this reauthorization, would continue to be committed to achieving its legislated goal of promoting voluntary service to, for, and by the community in which the volunteers serve. Two years of experience with ACTION's program convince me that our approach of fostering self-help and self-reliance is more vital than ever.

The DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT AMENDMENTS of 1983 will enable ACTION to continue its successful work in providing volunteer assistance to both public and non-profit groups working to meet a wide range of human needs arising from the continuing problem of poverty.

Our largest programs are the Older American Volunteer Programs which utilize the remarkable skills and talents of citizens over age 60 to meet community needs. In some 1,000 communities OAVP volunteers are changing the stereo-type perceptions about what it looks and feels like to be 60 years of age or older. They answer not only the need of older persons to feel useful; they are of inestimable benefit to those served. In addition,

the programs are substantially cost-effective. For example, RSVP volunteers cost the Federal government only 47 cents per volunteer hour. If the same services were bought on the open market at the minimum wage, they would far exceed the cost of volunteer services now supported by the Federal government.

Retired Senior Volunteers serve more than 58,000,000 hours per year working in such areas as youth counseling, literacy enhancement, long-term care, and crime prevention. Other volunteers assist refugees, promote housing rehabilitation, and serve the disabled and frail elderly who might be institutionalized without their help.

Foster Grandparents serve 20 hours per week working both inside and outside of institutions with children who have mental, physical and emotional handicaps. They also serve children who are abused or neglected, who are in the juvenile justice system or in foster care settings, or who have other special needs. Foster Grandparents help to prevent or delay the institutionalization of children and to deinstitutionalize children who can live within the community.

Senior Companions, who also serve 20 hours per week, seek to prevent or delay the institutionalization of the chronically homebound elderly, shorten the stay of those elderly persons temporarily institutionalized, and deinstitutionalize persons

who are able to live at home when some services are provided. They perform a critical role in providing long-term care by assisting adults with mental, emotional, and physical impairments to achieve and maintain their fullest potential to be healthy, and to manage their lives independently.

ACTION is committed to the principle that the satisfaction of each volunteer is a direct result of her or his involvement in activities which will improve the lives of others and enrich their own. In addition, OAVP seeks to:

Encourage the recognition of older persons' ability to facilitate solutions to problems;

Encourage OAVP projects to develop program activities which promote the mobilization of local resources to meet local needs;

Encourage volunteer assignments which increase intergenerational contacts; and

Encourage increased state and/or local funding of OAVP-type programs.

OAVP, in an effort to explore ways to expand and strengthen community involvement under today's economic pressures, is encouraging the projects to increase support from their own communities. Private sector involvement could include: making corporate contributions to existing OAVP projects to expand volunteer service opportunities, expanding the number of senior volunteers in service; and coordinating OAVP efforts to involve corporate retirees in community service through pre-retirement seminars and post-retirement recruitment.

Local communities are contributing $14 million annually toward support of OAVP programs; governors and state legislators are approving funds in excess of $16 million annually.

Besides encouraging the recognition of the older person as a solution to problems rather than as a problem, one of our goals is to coordinate OAVP program activities with other ACTION programs and with programs of other governmental and nongovernmental agencies. For example, over 10,000 volunteers from 93 projects are involved in joint programming efforts and sponsors in 70 communities administer more than one OAVP project.

Our Service-Learning Programs recruit high school and college volunteers to assist in community efforts to alleviate poverty and related problems. The National Center for Service Learning provides information and technical assistance, and the Young Volunteers in ACTION program offers youth between the ages of 14-22 the opportunity for part-time non-stipended service. This program now numbers 73 projects and is enabling thousands of youth to serve their communities productively.

The activities of the Voluntary Citizen Participation Program include working with State governments, private voluntary organizations, and citizens to expand the scope of voluntary community work.

ACTION's Volunteer Demonstration Program supports the development and testing of national and local projects by private organizations to mobilize and train volunteers to combat drug abuse, illiteracy, and the problems of runaway and homeless youth.

The efforts of our grantees under this program have been quite successful. ACTION's work in drug abuse prevention, for example, has become a central part of the government's overall drug abuse prevention strategy.

We are not requesting reauthorization of the VISTA program which is more costly and less effective than our other programs.

I will close by pointing out that ACTION's programs are about self-help -- finding ways for people to do as much as possible for themselves and each other without having to depend on the federal government for long-term assistance. Our programs aim to enable people to enhance their self reliance by offering them opportunities to be productive, to be enterprising, and to use the skills and understanding that they have gained over a lifetime. The proposed DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT of 1983 for ACTION would be consistent with and centrally important to implementing the agency goals -- to help alleviate social problems humanely and cost effectively.

Since ACTION, as the national volunteer agency, wishes to continue to devote its unique expertise and experience to the task of promoting voluntary activity, I am proud to recommend on behalf of the Administration that the Congress reauthorize ACTION.

ACTION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20525

OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

June 6, 1983

Honorable Jeremiah Denton
Chairman
Subcommittee on Family and Human Services
Committee on Labor and Human Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Denton:

Attached are the questions and answers submitted by Senator Metzenbaum for the Subcommittee hearing record of April 22.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Tom Pauken

Thomas W. Pauken
Director

Questions Submitted by the Subcommittee

The following questions were not asked at the hearing but were submitted for the record.

Senator Metzenbaum

Question:

Mr. Pauken, you have been quoted many times as stating that VISTA should not be continued because of its minimal cost-effectiveness. The Agency's 1984 budget submission states that the decision to terminate VISTA was based on its minimal cost-effectiveness and a reassessment of the role of full-time volunteer stipended volunteers in community services. Please explain to the committee.

Answer:

As we said in response to a similar question [illegible] Mr. Early some weeks ago, the minimal cost-effectiveness of VISTA refers to its expense when compared to a non-stipended program such as RSVP. We believe that the federal government can no longer afford to pay for full-time stipended volunteers and should promote expansion of part-time, unpaid volunteer programs to work on these same poverty-related issues.

Question:

When was the last time you conducted a thorough study of the cost-effectiveness of the VISTA program?

Answer:

The surveys were conducted in 1979 and 1973 which, in part, purport to show that VISTA Volunteers generate funds and local part-time volunteers for their projects. However, we question the methods used to collect this information and therefore its validity. That VISTA is not cost-effective is simple to demonstrate. RSVPs cost about $80-100 per year, and $0.48 per hour; VISTAs cost close to $7,000 per year at $3.25 per hour.

Question:

Has there been a study conducted since the 1979 survey that showed each volunteer generated on the average $24,000 in resources at the local level for his or her project and 15 or more full-time or part-time volunteers?

Answer:

No. We would point out that the 1979 survey is nowhere regarded as scientific, and that the resource generation sample contains, throughout, idiosyncratic interpretations of key data. Indeed, compilers of the survey themselves suggested that "extreme caution" be used in citing any figures related to generation of resources.

Question:

Is it true that despite the explanation given in the Agency's budget submission, you recently informed the House Appropriations Committee that there was no assessment conducted concerning the roles of full-time stipended volunteers in community service?

Answer:

We believe that no reliable study has ever been done which shows VISTA to be a cost effective program. Our judgement is that it is not cost effective, for the reasons given in answer to your second question. We did not conduct such a study ourselves because the decision to end the program was made prior to my appointment to the Agency.

Question:

You have often stated that YVA is a more cost-effective program than VISTA. According to testimony presented by ACTION Deputy Director Brake, it cost $4.40 an hour to support a YVA Volunteer and, according to your budget submission and information provided to the House Appropriations Committee, it cost $3.25 an hour to support a VISTA Volunteer. In light of this, why aren't you proposing the elimination of YVA and the continuation of VISTA?

Answer:

We regard YVA as more cost-effective than VISTA for the following reasons:

1. The program is designed to generate private funding from the outset of any project. In the first year, 10% is required from the private source, and in the second year, 25%. This feature is a part of the YVA guidelines. VISTA resource generation, on the other hand, is earnestly sought after, but private sector resource development--stipulated in guidelines as to amount--is nonexistent.

2. YVA guidelines call for individual project outlays in the amount of $20,000 to support 200 volunteers who accomplish 10,000 hours of service. This formulation provides for per hour volunteer cost of $2. The present level of $4.40 per hour reflects a normal situation during the early months of a program. In time, the per hour cost will come down. The current cost should be viewed as a point on a graph that shows steadily declining per hour cost since YVA's inception.

By contrast, VISTA's per hour costs are pegged to low-income cost of living rates that resist any significant downward movement. The per hour rate does not seem likely to move much below $3.25.

Question:

The only way to compare the cost effectiveness of various ACTION programs is to compare them on a per hour basis. How can you compare the cost of supporting an RSVP Volunteer who serves on the average 8 hours a month or 96 hours a year with the cost of supporting a VISTA who serves well over 40 hours a week or over 2,000 hours a year? Haven't you been comparing apples and oranges?

Answer:

As we said in reply to your first question, we believe that part-time volunteers can be an effective force in community efforts to combat poverty. The federal government should encourage and help to expand the number of local, part-time volunteers in these roles, rather than pay directly for a much smaller number of full-time VISTAs. The low-stipended and non-stipended, part-time volunteer work is more likely to be sustained in local communities over a long period of time, as evidenced by the Older American Volunteer Programs. These programs are more cost-effective and, at the same time, beneficial to those in need and more in keeping with the successful tradition of private and local volunteerism.

Question:

What percentage of RSVP programs specifically address poverty and poverty-related problems?

Answer: RSVP is not mandated to address poverty or poverty-related problems, however, the majority of the projects do. Data is not collected in these terms, but RSVP volunteer activities are responsive to community needs. It is safe to estimate that more than half of RSVP activities address problems related to poverty, based on the kinds of volunteer stations to which volunteers are assigned: hos-

pitals, nursing home, home health agencies, correctional centers, courts, elementary and secondary schools, day care centers, mental health agencies, alcohol rehabilitation centers, recreational departments, United Way. FISH, achievement centers, cancer, arthritis, heart and lung associations, community action councils, adult basic education, Right-to-Read programs, Meals-on-Wheels, sheltered workshops, tax assistance programs, fixed income counseling, consumer education, etc. etc.

Question:

How many VISTA volunteers and VISTA projects are currently operating in Ohio? How do these figures compare to the numbers in 1982, 1981, and 1978?

Answer:

As of April 30, 1983, there were 29 volunteers and 8 VISTA projects in Ohio. On September 30, 1982, there were 64 volunteers and 15 projects and on September 30, 1981, there were 91 volunteers and 32 projects. Accurate figures are not available for 1978.

Question:

In light of the congressional mandate concerning the placement of VISTA Volunteers, how many volunteers will be placed in Ohio throughout FY '83? How do those figures compare to neighboring states such as Michigan and Illinois?

Answer:

An unusually high number of volunteers have re-enrolled or extended their service throughout Region III, of which Ohio is a part, and it appears that limited funds will be available for new volunteers in Ohio in FY '83.

Approximately 37 new volunteers will be placed in Michigan in FY '83, and 60 will be placed in Illinois.

Question:

I have been alerted by a number of VISTA sponsors in Ohio that the Memorandum of Agreement between ACTION and the sponsoring organization which specifies the terms and conditions of the project now, for the first time, includes the following sentence, "This is the last and final year of this VISTA project." Is this a standard line you are including in all VISTA Memoranda of Agreement, or is it, as I understand, being added only to projects operating in the Mid-Atlantic Region headed by Mr. Eugene Pasymowski?

Answer:

The sentence, "This is the last and final year of this VISTA project", was included in a few memoranda of agreement in Region III. The practice was discontinued upon consultation with the national office.

Question:

Last year, the Ohio office was moved from the Midwest Region to the Mid-Atlantic Region. Mr. Pasymowski, the Regional Director now responsible for Ohio, testified before this Committee two years ago in opposition to the continuation of VISTA. Is Mr. Pasymowski following an Agency policy in adding this sentence to sponsors' Memoranda of Agreement, or is he acting on his own?

Answer:

It should be noted that Mr. Pasymowski's testimony referred to abuses of VISTA that he felt needed correction. He did not oppose continuation of VISTA. Mr. Pasymowski understood regulations and policy to permit inclusion of the sentence.

Question:

What is the justification for this addition? Is the addition being made to "selected projects" as a way to deny them eligibility for appeal procedures guaranteed to all sponsors denied refunding under Sec. 412 of the Act?

Answer:

Since the practice referred to has been stopped, this question is moot.

Questions submitted by Senator Denton

Question:

Would you please submit the details of sponsorship of the New York Foster Grandparent Developmental Disabilities to several sponsors in the State?

Answer:

The decision to decentralize the New York Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) was made only after more than nine months of discussions and in-depth analysis of the problems in the grant. In June of 1982, ACTION staff met in New York City with OMRDD officials to discuss the more pressing concerns with the project. These included ACTION's concern over the under enrollment of volunteers in the previous two grant years which resulted in an under-expenditure of federal funds amounting to $183,796, an amount equivalent to 91,898 hours of service or eighty-eight (88) volunteer service years. As of the June meeting, OMRDD had continued the trend of under-expenditure in the current project fiscal year, a denial of volunteer opportunities to eligible older adults and their much needed ministering to additional children having exceptional or special needs. The meeting also addressed concerns over high administrative cost of the project and the manner in which it was being administered. The outcome was that ACTION would submit to OMRDD an analysis of the project and a plan for addressing the concerns that had been expressed. On July 14, 1982, ACTION forwarded to OMRDD analysis of their project costs, a comparison of administrative costs of all FGP projects in New York State, information on the conversion of a large statewide project in Pennsylvania to smaller community-based projects that resulted in a net reduction of administrative cost of 35%, a description of the potential benefits of such a conversion, and a plan for a cooperative (ACTION-OMRDD) conversion of the New York project. (See Attachment #1.)

It is noteworthy that in August of 1982, a New York State study entitled "Willowbrook: From Institution to the Community," reinforced ACTION's assessment of OMRDD's management shortcomings. The study indicates that local private non-profit agencies providing services under contract to OMRDD were able to provide equal or better quality service to the developmentally disabled at a cost that was 40% less than when OMRDD provided the service themselves.

At no time in the nine months of discussions with OMRDD did the New York State officials demonstrate a willingness to cooperate in solving the problems ACTION outlined.

On November 19, 1982, in response to OMRDD's application for continuation, ACTION Region II Contracts and Grants Officer Tony Lazarra forwarded a notice of intent to deny refunding to OMRDD. This notice listed the reasons for the denial of refunding, which were as follows (see Attachament #2, Tentative Denial of Refunding Letter):

Lack of accountability in management of the grant as evidenced by:

1) Projected administrative costs per volunteer service year (VSY) for the project increased from $543 to $1,087 in five years, a 100% increase.

2) Failure to submit financial status reports (FSRs) on a timely basis. For the period 7/1/79 through 6/30/82, all 14 financial status reports were received after the due dates.

3) Reported expenditures for stipend outlays and manhours are not compatible, resulting in inaccurate financial status reports.

4) Not meeting project goals for volunteer service years as evidenced by the underexpenditure of the stipend line item.

5) A confusing and frequently changed description of the actual OMRDD contribution to the Foster Grandparent Program. November, 1982 statements range from the amount of $833 thousand shown in one of the budgets accompanying the request for federal assistance, to the amount of $1.002 million shown in the second budget accompanying the same request, to $2.5 million, $2.8 million, and $4.0 million alluded to by OMRDD officials.

6) The obfuscation of lines of delineation between the state-funded Senior Companions and jointly (ACTION and OMRDD) funded Foster Grandparents.

7) Unwarranted disturbing of Foster Grandparents through distortion of ACTION's intent related to a consideration of decentralization of the OMRDD project; and the prolonged concern caused the Foster Grandparents by delaying in excess of three months provision of Foster Grandparent

names and addresses requested by ACTION in order that ACTION might allay the groundless fears of the volunteers in regard to cessation of their volunteer service opportunities.

8) A high volunteer attrition rate.

9) Repeated lateness (by several weeks in some cases) in payment of stipends, as reported by a number of Foster Grandparents who wrote and called ACTION.

At that time, OMRDD was made aware of the options available to them, including a meeting with an ACTION official to "show cause" why continued funding should not be denied. On December 14, 1982, OMRDD exercised this option and provided information to Herbert Stupp, ACTION Region II Director, in both an oral presentation and written documents. On December 30, 1982, after careful consideration of the meeting record, written materials, and other pertinent documents, Region II Director Herbert Stupp issued a final denial of refunding for the New York OMRDD statewide project (see Attachment #3, Final Denial of Refunding Letter - December 30, 1982).

ACTION's decision to decentralize the OMRDD project was based on the premise that volunteer opportunities should be maximized with the resources available. We had hoped that OMRDD shared this concern and would cooperate in achieving a more equitable portion of the funds being utilized to expand the number of low-income elderly volunteers. We remain hopeful that, in the future, OMRDD may decide to take up this challenge and assist ACTION in expanding volunteer opportunities to the low-income elderly in New York.

Question:

What authorization level would be necessary to maintain current services in the VISTA program? Is an inflation factor included in the figure? If so, what does it include?

Answer:

With no cost increase over FY 1983, an authorization level of $13.2 million would be needed to maintain VISTA at current services -- that is, a level of 1,800 volunteers.

With cost increases, an authorization level of $14 million would be needed. This budget would permit a 9% increase in the subsistence allowance, which has not been increased since September, 1980, and is now $385 per month before taxes. Also included is a 10% increase in volunteer health insurance (which went up 19.4% in Fy 1983) and a 33% increase, from $67 per service yaar to $100 per service year, in volunteer in-service training, project supervisors' training and volunteer career development. However, even at $100 per service year the in-service training budget remains 25% below FY 1982 levels. Projected, also, in the $14 million budget is a 3.7% increase in volunteer project supervision and on-the-job transportation.

Question:

How does the ACTION Agency calculate volunteer strength in the field? Has ACTION always used this method of calculation?

Answer:

For FGP and SCP

For planning purposes, volunteer strength information is gathered from the Notice of Grant Awards (NGAs)

Actual volunteer strength information is gathered from the Financial Status Reports (FSRs).

For RSVP

Volunteer strength information for planning purposes is gathered from the grant application, while actual volunteer strength information comes from the Annual Project Profile.

OAVP has always used this method of calculation.

For VISTA

This question can be interpreted in two ways: First, volunteer strength may be the number of volunteers in active service at a point time. Volunteer names, social security numbers, project assignments and other pertinent data are maintained in the agency's personnel file. Computer reports, prepared for the end of each month, tally volunteers on board nationally by region and by state. Second, volunteer strength may be viewed as the number of service years or work-years that can be supported at a particular appropriation level. A service-year is defined as 12 months of service during a fiscal year by one or more volunteers. Also, it is the average number of volunteers serving in any fiscal year.

Question:

Why was ACTION unable to place any VISTA volunteers in the first quarter of this year?

Answer:

ACTION did not place VISTA Volunteers in the first quarter of FY 1983 because to do so would have been inconsistent with the Administration's stated desire to end the VISTA program. However when the agency's second Continuing Resolution (C.R.) was passed (the first ran only until December 17, 1982), the agency took steps - to the extent this was possible at the time -- to comply with the requirement imposed by that C.R. that new volunteers be placed evenly over the fiscal year.

Questions submitted by Senator Dodd

Question:

Your proposed legislation would eliminate VISTA and along with it the anti-poverty mandate of the Act. Do you feel that we no longer need to focus on anti-povety programs even though we have record unemployment in this country today?

Answer:

The Administration regards VISTA as not cost effective. Measured against ACTION's RSVP program, for example, VISTA, in which volunteers receive full stipend, is clearly less cost effective.

The poor in America would be adequately helped through existing volunteer programs; more RSVPs would move in to meet the need, and more private sector resources would help.

Question 1(a):

Isn't VISTA the primary program in ACTION focusing on feeding the hungry?

Answer:

ACTION's Older American programs concentrate heavily on provision of emergency food for the poor. VISTA plays a role, but we note that ACTION is primarily interested in apportioning its resources smoothly among all its programs so the the goal of emergency food distribution can be met effectively. We could continue to help providing volunteer support to food banks even without the VISTA vehicle.

Question 1(b):

How do the hours of service dedicated by VISTAs to food banks and other hunger related projects compare with the hours of other ACTION volunteers?

Answer:

RSVP has 80,000 volunteers contributing 13 million hours per year to hunger related projects at the cost of 48 cents per hour. This is 25% of the total RSVP volunteer strength and hours.

VISTA has 210 volunteers working 436,000 hours per year on hunger related projects as of June 6, 1983. Please note that by September 15, 1983, there should be 399 volunteers working on hunger related projects as that is the total number approved for placement in 1983. The total hours worked for 399 VISTA volunteers would be 829,920 hours at $3.25 per hour. This would be approximately 24% of the total volunteers.

Therefore, both programs have placed approximately 25% of their volunteer strength on hunger related projects. Please note that RSVP contributes 15.7 times the number of hours at only 2.3 times the cost of VISTA.

Question:

The Older Americans programs and many others have told us that the full time commitment of VISTAs can not be replaced by part-time volunteers. These people have been working in and with volunteer programs longer than you and I. Why should we not take their counsel on this matter?

Answer:

Volunteerism of the best sort existed for millennia before the advent of VISTA. Uplift was achieved, barns got raised, the needy were succoured and the sick were healed even without VISTA. If VISTA ended tomorrow, neighbor would still help neighbor. Given finite resources, we judge private energies to be most efficient bearers of aid. History and experience amply bear us out. We do well to take such counsel seriously, even as we hear the voice of others.

Question:

VISTA has a long and admirable record as both a provider of services to the elderly and a recipient of the efforts of seniors who have been volunteers. VISTAs work in the areas of housing, health care, nutrition, legal services, employment, nursing home reform, and outreach services in rural areas has resulted in tremendous improvements in the lives of many, many senior citizens. Won't the elimination of VISTA have a devastating effect on older Americans?

Answer:

Our replies to the previous questions suggest that private resources mobilization at times of trial has been effective in improving the lives of the poor. Resources no longer needed for VISTA could be used to augment our other volunteer programs, whose cost-effectiveness is clear cut.

Question:

The Domestic Volunteer Service Act states that VISTA should provide volunteer opportunities to people of all walks of life, including retired Americans from cities and country districts.

While little or no recruitment efforts in terms of public service announcements or literature being distributed, aren't opportunities for volunteer service being restricted to those lucky enough to know of an organization in their community already looking for help?

Answer:

Private sector organizations have no difficulty in recruiting talented VISTAs. Monies saved can be used for the program. In addition, the infrastructure of Federal, state and local agencies provides for a massive network of information sharing about volunteer and other service opportunities.

Question:

According to G.A.O. testimony before the House Education and Labor Committee earlier this week, over the past two years ACTION has failed in countless instances to administer the VISTA program according to congressional mandate.

ACTION unlawfully reduced VISTAs budget, disbanded ongoing VISTA projects, and refused to fund new VISTA projects. Furthermore, ACTION diverted VISTA funds to programs which G.A.O. characterizes as inappropriate for VISTA volunteers.

In light of these disturbing findings, how can this committee be assured that the VISTA program in the future will be administered in compliance with the law and serious abuses such as these will cease?

Answer:

The VISTA program since 1981 has been managed with the utmost attention to proper fulfillment of the laws regulating it. Indeed, the G.A.O. testimony produced no finding of wrongdoing whatsoever.

VISTA continues to be operated in compliance with law, and we can assure the committee that such is our sole intent.

Questions submitted by Senator Hatch

Question:

Are there ways that the administration of the ACTION programs could be more efficient of streamlined at either the Federal, Regional, or State level?

Answer:

ACTION is continually evaluating its internal management systems to increase efficiency and save money.

Some improvements which ACTION has made and which impact program management are listed below:

1. Streamlined accounting procedures have produced better money management and use of personnel.

2. Improved planning and budgeting procedures have resulted in better money management, program development, and use of personnel.

3. Stricter monitoring of all expenditures, such as travel, has effected a more efficient use of limited funds.

4. An effective audit system has insured proper use of federal program funds.

Currently under study are the Computer Services Division and the VISTA Program Management system. Of course, close relations are maintained between state, regional, and federal offices to ensure the proper management of all ACTION programs. Training programs and regional/state re-organizations have resulted in more efficient management after the RIF. Please note that ACTION proposed to close or reduce 13 state offices to improve management efficiency. However, this action was prohibited in the last continuing resolution.

Question:

In the current law there is progressive percentage requirement for local contributions for a RSVP grant or contract.

What is the maximum level of match that ACTION has required in the past? Are there any plans to fully implement the higher percentage contribution level?

Answer:

The original requirement by ACTION was for 100% local support in the sixth and subsequent years. This was modified by legislation in 1975, as reflected by the current Act. The recently proposed RSVP regulations clearly state that the percentage of local support provided in the program legislation are to be used as a guide by ACTION in negotiating the level of local support and that the level of local support may be higher or lower, as mutually agreed to by ACTION and the RSVP sponsor, and as justified by local conditions. The regulations are intended to enable the Agency to respond to local conditions and to reflect the method for arriving at the level of local support that has evolved since 1976.

Question:

The National Voluntary Service Council would be terminated by the Community Volunteer Service Act (S. 1129) as of January 1, 1986. What would be the implications of this provision? What are the current activities of the council and expenditures?

Answer:

The National Advisory Council on Voluntary Service not only advises ACTION on volunteerism and private sector initiatives, but makes the final selection of the winners of the President's Volunteer ACTION Awards, which are presented annually. Should the Council be abolished, an entirely new procedure for selecting the winners of the Presidential awards would have to be devised. In addition, ACTION would lose the advantage of the Council's perspective, which is particularly valuable as Council members come from a variety of professional and geographical areas.

The Council members receive no compensation, but are paid expenses. Many of them do not even claim expenses, but pay their own hotel and travel. For the two meetings held in fiscal year 1983, the maximum expense will be $5,459.10 (assuming all Council members collect per diem and travel, which is unlikely).

Question for Mr. Thomas Pauken and Panel II

Question:

In exploring ways to provide cost-effectrive programs, increase the number of volunteers, and allow the necessary flexibility needed, an option would be to include the use of part-time VISTA volunteers. What would be the administrative impact of allowing part-time stipended volunteers to serve in the VISTA program?

Answer:

To allow part-time stipended volunteers to serve in the VISTA program would entail a "one-time only" start-up administrative expense. Programming and payroll designs, once in place, would follow routine systems already established.

Senator DENTON. The reauthorization involved a change in the purpose clause of title I, which previously stated the purpose is to "strengthen and supplement efforts to eliminate poverty and poverty-related human social and environmental problems." We have deleted the words "social environmental" and wonder if you think that that would seriously cripple the definition of the efforts of VISTA volunteers in combating human problems such as unemployment?

Mr. PAUKEN. I do not see that change having any impact upon our current activities. If there were such a change, I do not see any activities under our current VISTA guidelines being disallowed.

Senator DENTON. Does the Agency have a position on the use of part-time volunteers in the VISTA program as would be authorized under the Hatch-Denton bill?

Mr. PAUKEN. No, we do not have a specific position on that, Mr. Chairman. Our general position is that we do prefer non-paid volunteers with a structure similar to RSVP-YVA, where you have a small administrative staff and unpaid nonstipended volunteers, which generally means part-time volunteers.

Senator DENTON. Can you comment on the requirement in the reauthorization bill that VISTA volunteers be placed in their own communities?

Mr. PAUKEN. We have already implemented that idea of recruiting local volunteers, on our own. We think it makes a lot of sense and I have had members on both sides of the aisle, in their own chambers, express some concern about the previous administration's sending in outside VISTA volunteers who really did not have a stake in the local community.

I think it makes good sense to encourage the recruitment of local volunteers.

Senator DENTON. We have a copy of a letter sent from a Project Director to the ACTION Agency complaining of the poor quality of VISTA volunteers. He is generally supportive of the program but mentions that volunteers cannot be effectively reprimanded or docked for poor work habits because the stipend check comes from Washington, the Federal Government volunteers are really then responsive to Federal and not local control.

How do you feel nonstipend program would work?

Mr. PAUKEN. Well, I think that is a legitimate point that you raise. I think one of the aspects of a nonstipend program is that if you had nonstipended volunteers, obviously they are there on their own volition and they can be let go if it is not working out. It is a far more difficult process with a VISTA volunteer who really, in effect, is a paid VISTA worker for at least a year. There are some avenues to get a volunteer removed from the rolls, but it is a fairly difficult process. So I think that a change would make some sense, it would be similar to the way the Older American volunteer programs are run and directed and controlled at a local level.

Senator DENTON. Would you comment on the requirement that projects should have evidence local support before the application is approved?

Mr. PAUKEN. Well, I know the issue has been raised as to whether that ought to be in the authorization language. The way I read the statute, it is generally assumed that that should be the case al-

ready. I think we are comfortable with the language the way it is. I do not see that any additional requirements would be needed on that issue.

Senator DENTON. Does the administration have a position on the expansion of the Senior Companion program to include a home health care component?

Mr. PAUKEN. I do not know that there is an overall official administration position on that, Mr. Chairman. I personally feel that the idea of utilizing Senior Companions and Retired Senior volunteers in home health care has been very successful. It has principally been the Senior Companions, with some of our Retired Senior Volunteers who are working in that area. I think there is plenty of money generally in large departments, involved with home health care for other Americans I do not think it would necessarily cost any additional Federal dollars to be able to shift some resources that are currently being expended elsewhere, that are perhaps not that effective, in terms of utilizing older Americans, and move them into this area. I do not have an official position but I would be very comfortable with something along those lines.

Senator DENTON. What effect would the $18 million program support budget have on the administration of programs in your agency?

Mr. PAUKEN. It puts us in a difficult bind, Senator. It would probably require closing down all of the field offices. Congress, in the current fiscal year, thought it unwise to take such a course of action and has prohibited us from doing so. So we would have grave difficulty functioning under those figures if VISTA were continued and if the field structure were still in place. I think the $18 million figure assumes the elimination of VISTA and the elimination of the field structure.

Senator DENTON. How do you look at the $29 million figure contained in S. 1129?

Mr. PAUKEN. I think that if VISTA is continued and if the field structure remains intact, that would be sufficient funding to carry out the ACTION programs.

Senator DENTON. The House version has a floor on the funding authorization for VISTA, and we have a $7 million ceiling on it in the Hatch-Denton bill.

Would you comment on your view of those approaches?

Mr. PAUKEN. Well, I would much prefer the Senate version with the ceiling. By putting in a floor and having a sum much larger than we currently have with regard to VISTA right now, it would eliminate, as far as I can determine, any discretionary activity in the area of drug abuse, the Vietnam veterans leadership program, the illiteracy area, and the runaway youth area, areas where with small amounts of money I think we have been very effective in making a positive difference. So we think the Senate version makes a lot more sense.

Senator DENTON. S. 1129 provides a phaseout of the National Advisory Board by January 1, 1986. Does the administration have a position on that phaseout?

Mr. PAUKEN. We are opposed to that, Mr. Chairman. We think that for a small amount of money the advisory council has done a lot of good, particularly in its involvement in the selection process

of the volunteer awards. In fact, 20 awardees were recognized by President Reagan just 1 week ago at the White House. So I think that for a small amount of money the Advisory Council provides a very useful function.

I will be happy to supply to the committee the costs of the advisory council, but these are unpaid individuals, the only cost involved is their travel when they come to Washington, as they have in the past, for meetings.

[The following was received for the record:]

The Council members receive no compensation, but are paid expense. Many of them do not even claim expenses, but pay their own hotel and travel. For the two meetings held in fiscal year 1983, the maximum expense will be $5,459.10 (assuming all councal members collect per diem and travel, which is unlikely).

Senator DENTON. Senator Dodd was unable to be with us and has some written questions which I will submit to you in writing and enter them into the record today. There are five questions.

He also has a statement which will be entered into the record as if read after my own statement.

[The prepared statement of Senator Dodd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Mr. Chairman, the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, the subject of this morning's hearing, has worked to strengthen our commitment to the poor, the forgotten, and the disadvantaged in this country.

Three programs authorized under this act enable older Americans to improve the health, educational, and social services in their communities. Foster Grandparents, for example, adopt children who need special care and attention because of physical handicaps or emotional problems. Through the retired senior volunteer program, older volunteers assist others in settings from town halls to daycare centers. Senior companions visit their frail, house-bound neighbors, helping them with daily chores. Without such assistance, these neighbors might be forced to move to nursing homes for they cannot take care of their routine needs alone.

I understand that the bill you introduced yesterday, Mr. Chairman, would increase funding for the senior companion program by $12 million. Such increased funding may prevent the unnecessary placement of hundreds of older persons in institutions. I commend you and the chairman of the full committee, Mr. HATCH, for your foresight.

Another program authorized by this act, VISTA, allows older and younger volunteers to work on projects ranging from improving low-income housing to curbing domestic violence. Given the current harsh economic conditions we face today, VISTA volunteers are needed now more than ever to help countless unemployed, homeless, and hungry Americans.

As a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic some 15 years ago, I helped build roads, a school, and a maternity hospital. Such work provided the mothers and infants in that community with better health care and older children with a better education.

We cannot in good conscience attempt to eliminate poverty and illiteracy overseas via the Peace Corps without making the same efforts here at home through VISTA. I urge my colleagues to support the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act without cutting back funding for VISTA.

Senator DENTON. I am advised that Senator Hatch will also have written questions, and there is a possibility that other Senators will also.

I want to thank you again, Mr. Pauken, Ms. Brake, Mr. Genebach, Dr. Blitz, for coming here this morning, and congratulate you again on your fine work.

Mr. PAUKEN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator DENTON. Would our next panel come forward, please, Mr. Joseph Trotta and Ms. Cecilia Jesilowski.

I would like to welcome you both here this morning and note that Mr. Joseph Trotta would have been introduced by Senator Dodd were he here. I will read some of the information which Senator Dodd would have given us.

Mr. Trotta started volunteer services in the Department of Corrections in the State of Connecticut in 1974. There are now 33 volunteer programs serving Connecticut's inmates, including VISTA. Program projects range from running "Sesame Street" sessions for children visiting fathers in prison to providing the mother of such children with crisis counseling.

We certainly look forward to hearing from you, Mr. Trotta, about those interesting programs.

Ms. Cecilia Jesilowski is a VISTA volunteer from United Societies of St. Stanislaus, and we will be looking forward to hearing what you have to say, too, very much.

Would you proceed, Mr. Trotta?

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH TROTTA, CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, AND CECILIA JESILOWSKI, VISTA VOLUNTEER, UNITED SOCIETIES OF ST. STANISLAUS

Mr. TROTTA. Thank you for inviting me here to be with you this morning. It is an honor which I share with Connecticut Corrections and with the 125 VISTA volunteers from all walks of life who have served in our program.

The VISTA volunteer program has been very successful in Connecticut Corrections and I believe that our success is not unique, since the ACTION program is a valuable resource to those who are fortunate to be a part of it. In order to appreciate the success of our VISTA program, I believe it would be helpful to this committee if I were to quickly review the history and philosophy of the program in our department.

The VISTA program was initiated in Connecticut Corrections in 1972 by Edward Quinlan and I took it over in 1974. From the very beginning of the program, Commissioner John R. Manson and Commissioner Raymond Lopes have supported it. It goes without saying, that for a program to be successful in any agency, be it in the public or private sector, it must have the full support of that agency's top administrators.

Concurrent with the initiation of our VISTA program, a philosophy which was to greatly impact Connecticut Corrections and which, so to speak, help set the stage for the VISTA program, was being developed in our department. This philosophy maintained that both the public and private sector be partners and work together to solve the problems which face the criminal justice system. Simply stated its goals were: constituency building, thorough education of the public, and second, service delivery through purchase of service. In short, it was believed that the problems facing criminal justice and their subsequent solutions were not the sole domain of the public sector.

It was also at this time that the department was making a long-range commitment to voluntarism, and the involvement of the general public through individual volunteer efforts. This double commitment to the public/private partnership and to volunteer serv-

ices provided the foundation on which our now successful VISTA program is based. Presently, the VISTA's are working in a context in which over 1,100 volunteers contribute their time and energy to the department of correction.

The VISTA program, because of its nature, developed a philosophy all of its own. The underlying philosophy of the VISTA program can be summed up in these words: creativity, innovation, experimentation, localization, and expansion of resources.

This philosophy gave us the ability to attract and recruit dynamic and outstanding volunteers and, in all honesty, our VISTA program is good because our volunteers make it so. We ask our VISTA's to be creative and innovative. Our VISTA's are asked to be continuously looking for new ways of doing things to set up new programs, or to improve existing systems where needed. The volunteer is encouraged to leave a legacy and not to build a house of cards which will collapse when his or her term of service has been completed.

The majority of our VISTA volunteers have been placed in the community with a view of strengthening the public and private sector's relationship.

Our society is basically pragmatic, naturally the question arises: Is the VISTA program working? We seem to think that it is, and here are some examples of programs which were created by the labor and dedication of the many VISTA volunteers who served in Connecticut's department of correction.

Several years ago, the Hartford Coalition was just an idea. Now it is a vibrant agency which exists in the community with a large staff and eight member agencies. It provides job development and counseling services for ex-offenders and coordinates the services of its member agencies to avoid duplication.

Women in crisis is an exciting program serving women and their families whose men are incarcerated for the first time at the Connecticut Correction Institution at Somers.

Street Haven, a store-front operation serving poor youngsters in Bridgeport.

Correctional prerelease, a program which has helped to prepare 50 incarcerated men a month for their entry into the community.

Project Advocate, recruited volunteer attorneys who provided free civil legal assistance to our clients.

The Connecticut Association of Residential Facilities, a consortium of halfway homes which coordinates services and provides technical assistance to halfway houses throughout the State.

The systematic growth of decisions, a program utilizing community volunteers to teach decisionmaking skills to inmates.

The prison performing arts program, which uses inmates as actors and writers for theater productions.

These are but a few examples of the success of our program. Each of these programs continues to this day with local funding generated through the State, private foundations, and corporate contributions. If we were to add the budgets of all these agencies and others which I have not had time to mention, their total budgets would be about $1 million a year. Fully one-half of their budgets come from the private sector or about $500,000 a year. If we look at the total cost of the VISTA program in corrections through-

out the years, day one until now, it would cost about $700,000. Thus, in 1 year, we generate funds from the private sector almost equal to the total cost of the entire VISTA volunteer program in the department of correction.

Just as importantly, all of these programs are serving the needs of the poor and the VISTA's who have worked in our departments have made successful careers for themselves in criminal justice and in other walks of life.

In 1983, VISTA and corrections have moved on. We now utilize VISTA's in substance abuse work and are in the process of establishing a continuity of care model for treatment of substance abusers. The future of the program can be bright because it is ever new. Each year brings new VISTA volunteers with new ideas and limitless energy.

There is a phenomenon in our society which I find to be both fascinating and confusing at the same time. The phenomenon is that unless something is frightfully expensive, it is not to be considered valuable or worthwhile. Volunteer services in general and the VISTA program in particular, which are extremely cost effective, suffer from this misconception and malady. Traditionally, volunteer coordinators have been grossly underpaid and our volunteer programs are grossly underfunded. People seem to think that volunteer programs happen by magic and at no cost. I am here to say that the opposite is true. It is not magic but hard work and dedication which make volunteer programs successful. And we all know you get nothing for nothing.

The VISTA program is one of the best investments we the American people can make. It is an investment in people who, because of a sense of commitment to an ideal and a love for their country, are willing to suffer financially in order to make a positive contribution to our society.

In the light of our demonstrated success in Connecticut and in the hope of a like success throughout this Nation, I urge you to fund the VISTA program to the greatest extent possible and to support voluntarism which is a part of the very fiber of our Nation and which has made our Nation great.

I thank you and I am willing to accept any questions which you might have.

Senator DENTON. Thank you, Mr. Trotta.

You have used VISTA volunteers over a period of years in a number of capacities. I understand the department of corrections in your State was denied the use of volunteers at one point; is that true?

Mr. TROTTA. In 1980 and 1981, we did not have a VISTA program, yes, sir.

Senator DENTON. Which administration actually denied the use of VISTA volunteers to the department?

Mr. TROTTA. The last administration, sir.

Senator DENTON. Do you have any idea why the Carter administration denied the use of volunteers?

Mr. TROTTA. Well, my sense of the situation is that we had the program from 1972 and I just think that they thought that it was time to move on. We were—we seem to have been very successful

and we were the establishment, and they thought that maybe the program should take a different direction.

Senator DENTON. Pursuing that last phrase, a different direction, have you experienced any problem with volunteers seeking to fulfill what you might perceive as their own political bias through your department over the years?

Mr. TROTTA. We have always—we encourage the public to know about legislative issues. However, we have never allowed our VISTA's to put forth their own biased views in any political area. That has been disallowed from the very beginning of our program.

Senator DENTON. You have named a number of programs such as job development, counseling services for ex-offenders, women in crisis, and so on.

Do you have any specific results such as relativity of success in rehabilitating ex-offenders after release compared to States without such programs? Anything at all to give an idea of the statistical success?

Mr. TROTTA. Yes, sir. As a matter of fact—I do not have it with me, but just about 1 month ago an independent evaluation was made of many of our community based programs and many of which VISTA has a unique contribution to make to them, and it was found that the inmates who had the services of these community programs in fact did much better than inmates who did not. And one other thing that we do know for certain is that if an inmate, when he or she is released to the community, if an inmate comes back to a family structure, their chances of being successful on the street and not returning to one of our prison facilities is enhanced. It is greatly enhanced. That is why we know for instance that women in crisis is extremely successful and the other programs are also successful.

I would be very willing to send a report of that evaluation to this committee if you so desire.

Senator DENTON. Thank you. We would like to receive those.

How would you regard a nonstipended VISTA program? Do you think it would enhance or degrade the quality of volunteers?

Mr. TROTTA. Well, as you know, from my testimony I coordinate over 1,100 volunteers is 30 some programs and they have made a tremendous and significant contribution to our department and to the clients which we serve. However, I think having full-time VISTA volunteers also offers some significant advantages.

First of all, we really feel very strongly, and discuss it at great length with potential VISTA volunteers is the notion of a commitment. We look, and we expect, and we generally receive a 1-year commitment, and that is very important to us.

We have really good communication because we have VISTA's who can give our efforts consistency and continuity, and so I feel that the VISTA program offers some very significant advantages. And one of the problems I have with mixing full-time VISTA's and maybe part-time VISTA's, I was listening to the letter which was submitted, that you referred to a moment ago about VISTA volunteers not performing up to capability, and the agency having problems with some kind of discipline, and I just wonder what the problems would be if we had part-time volunteers who might serve an hour a month. I really do not know what the definition of part-time

means at this particular juncture in controlling those people. If we only had them, say two days a week, they might get much more politically active than the VISTA volunteers ever thought of doing in the past. I do not know. So I have very mixed feelings about that.

[The questions and responses of Mr. Trotta follow:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES

APRIL 22, 1983 QUESTIONS FOR JOSEPH TROTTA, VISTA SPONSOR
ANSWERS TO CORRESPOND

Q. 1.

IN YOUR OPINION IS VISTA A COST-EFFECTIVE PROGRAM WORTHY OF CONTINUED SUPPORT;SO MANY SOCIAL PROGRAMS ARE LOSING FUNDING?

A. 1.

I BELIEVE THAT VISTA IS A COST-EFFECTIVE PROGRAM WORTHY OF SUPPORT ESPECIALLY NOW WHEN SO MANY SOCIAL PROGRAMS ARE LOSING FUNDING, BECAUSE VISTA, WHICH IS AN ANTI-POVERTY AGENCY, CAN BE USED TO GENERATE LOCAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE PROGRAMS- SINCE MOST SOCIAL PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED TO HELP THE POOR.

Q. 2.

AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW THE ADMINISTRATION'S VERSION OF THE REAUTHORIZATION BILL ELIMINATES VISTA. THE BILL PROPOSED BY SENATORS HATCH AND DENTON WOULD ALLOW BOTH FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME VISTAS. WHAT WOULD THE EFFECT BE ON SPONSORS LIKE YOURSELF IF THERE WERE BOTH FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME VISTAS?

(A) WOULD THIS CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS ADMINISTRATIVELY OR PROGRAMMATICALLY?

(B) WOULD IT AFFECT THE RANGE OF INDIVIDUALS YOU COULD RECRUIT AS VOLUNTEER?

A. 2.

FULL-TIME VOLUNTEERS OFFER CONTINUITY AND CONSISTENCY TO A PROGRAM EFFORT. THIS CONTINUITY AND CONSISTENCY WOULD BE LOST IF PART-TIME VOLUNTEERS WERE TO BE MIXED IN WITH FULL-TIME VISTAS.

I BELIEVE THE RANGE OF POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS WOULD BE REDUCED, ESPECIALLY IF THE PART-TIME VOLUNTEERS COULD NOT SUPPLEMENT THEIR INCOME. CONSEQUENTLY, ONLY PEOPLE OF SUBSTANTIAL MEANS WOULD BECOME VISTAS.

Q. 3.

IN YOUR TESTIMONY YOU STATED THAT YOU HAVE HAD VISTA VOLUNTEERS FOR OVER 10 YEARS. DO YOU KEEP REASSIGNING VISTA VOLUNTEERS TO THE SAME PROJECTS OR DO YOU CONTINUE TO DEVELOP NEW PROJECTS?

QUESTION 3 (CONTINUED)

(A) WHAT PROJECTS HAVE BEEN CONTINUED BY THE COMMUNITY AFTER VISTA VOLUNTEERS HAVE ENDED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THEM?

(B) WOULD YOU SAY THAT SUCH CONTINUATION IS EVIDENCE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR VISTA PROJECTS?

A. 3.

IN SOME CASES I HAVE ASSIGNED VISTAS TO THE SAME PROJECT BUT NEVER TO DO THE SAME TASKS. EACH VISTA IS USED TO BUILD UPON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PRECEDING VISTA.

3.(A) EACH OF THE PROJECTS WHICH I CITED IN MY TESTIMONY IS BEING CONTINUED BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. IT IS QUITE APPARENT THAT THIS CONTINUATION IS EVIDENCE OF LOCAL SUPPORT SINCE EACH PROGRAM RELIES HEAVILY ON LOCAL FUNDING.

Q. 4. (A)

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ANY OF THE 120 OR SO VISTAS WHO HAVE SERVED WITH THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION?

A. 4. (A)

MOST OF OUR VISTAS HAVE MOVED ON TO VERY PRODUCTIVE CAREERS. I HAVE INCLUDED A LETTER, WITH THE SENDER'S PERMISSION, WHICH I BELIEVE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE VALUE OF THE VISTA PROGRAM.

Q. 4. (B)

WAS IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO RECRUIT VISTA VOLUNTEERS FOR YOUR PROJECT?

A. 4. (B)

GENERALLY, NO, BECAUSE WE HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO MAKE A VISTAS EXPERIENCE WITH US MOST PRODUCTIVE AND PERSONALLY REWARDING. WE TRAIN OUR VISTAS EXTENSIVELY AND GIVE THEM CREATIVE AND WORTHWHILE ASSIGNMENTS.

SENATOR ORRIN G. HATCH

HEARING

DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT

QUESTIONS FOR PANEL II

1. IN EXPLORING WAYS TO PROVIDE COST-EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS, INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS, AND ALLOW THE NECESSARY FLEXIBILITY NEEDED, AN OPTION WOULD BE TO INCLUDE THE USE OF PART-TIME VISTA VOLUNTEERS. WHAT WOULD BE THE ADMINISTRATIVE IMPACT OF ALLOWING PART-TIME STIPENDED VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE IN THE VISTA PROGRAM?

Senator DENTON. All right. Thank you, Mr. Trotta. We will solicit your opinion on that as we develop it.

Ms. Jesilowski.

Ms. JESILOWSKI. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you first of all for the opportunity to be here to represent my group. My name is Mrs. Cecilia Jesilowski, and I am a representative of a Polish American social services.

The Polish American social services VISTA program began early in 1980. Since its inception, the goal of this program has been to help the elderly and disadvantaged members of the Polish American and Slavic communities in Philadelphia and its surrounding counties. We believe that in these troubled times our program has been of tremendous assistance to the clients it serves. We have reached out to the elderly, the homebound, to those with language barriers and the stigma of old age and economic hardship. We have helped these people keep their pride and stay in their homes. We help them to take advantage of the fuel rebates, property tax rebates and low income and senior citizen assistance programs. Our VISTA program is people helping people. I know that if I were too old to read a form, or if I did not understand a form, or if I did not know that a program existed, I would be very appreciative of someone or some group that would help me.

Many of the people we serve find themselves in this situation. They cannot understand forms because of education or language handicaps or old age. They have problems when dealing with city, State, and Federal government agencies and programs because very often no one in these agencies is willing to show the patience or willingness to understand their situation, nor are they able to communicate with them in a language they can understand.

During the past 2 years, we have worked with many senior citizen groups in our areas and, in many cases, we have helped groups develop. Our efforts with the refugees coming into our area, especially in looking for sponsors and jobs, have helped these poor souls. Also we have managed to keep many of these and other economically disadvantaged people from becoming burdens to our Government by keeping them off the welfare rolls.

Unfortunately, we have found that many agencies which claim to help refugees just bring them into this country and place them on public assistance as soon as they get here. We are opposed to this. We try to help these people learn that their hard work, even if in a minimum wage job, does pay off. I see how happy these newly arrived immigrants are when they hear a language they can understand and they find help through the kindness of one of our VISTA members. The rebates we help individuals with are ways of assistance that keep our welfare rolls down. I do not know what would happen if these people were forced to deal with the welfare bureaucracy.

Our local agency has been of tremendous help to us. They have taken a special interest in our work by giving us much support and information about programs for the elderly. This support helps us to do a better and more efficient job.

I thank you.

Senator DENTON. Thank you, Ms. Jesilowski.

The current statute requires that VISTA volunteers are provided a plan designed to provide an opportunity for job advancement or for transition to a situation leading to gainful employment.

Do you have an idea of how many VISTA volunteers use their experience as a volunteer to gain employment?

Ms. JESILOWSKI. To my knowledge, I could not give you an account of that immediately. We direct most of our information of that sort to our supervisor. But we have many in our area that are willing to advance themselves through this VISTA, through doing the volunteer work and to carry it on, say, after we were to leave the job.

Senator DENTON. Would you elaborate a little bit on the rebates that you mentioned?

Ms. JESILOWSKI. The fuel rebates that you referred to, Mr. Chairman?

Senator DENTON. Yes.

Ms. JESILOWSKI. Well, this is the low energy assistance program which we conduct at our outreach site. Many of the elderly are not aware that the program exists or has been in existence. Many of them are in their late seventies or eighties, they come in and do not know what this is all about, and we assist them with the application. And there is also the language barrier, a lot of people do not understand and cannot fill this form out, and we help them with that also.

Senator DENTON. Thank you very much, Ms. Jesilowski. We will be submitting some written questions.

I would like to welcome the presidents of the National Associations of Project Directors for the three Older American volunteer programs.

As I call their names, I will ask them to step forward and be seated at the witness table. Mr. Rummel, Mr. Jim Rummel, president of the National Association of RSVP Program Directors; Mrs. Betty Miller, president, National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors; and Mr. John Pribyl, president, National Association of Senior Companion Project Directors.

Welcome to the subcommittee. I will ask Mr. Rummel to begin.

STATEMENTS OF JAMES H. RUMMEL, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RSVP PROGRAM DIRECTORS, BETTY MILLER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM DIRECTORS, AND JOHN PRIBYL, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR COMPANION PROJECT DIRECTORS

Mr. RUMMEL. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the RSVP Directors Association, I am pleased to be here and to have this opportunity to talk with you today about the Older American volunteer programs and Retired Senior volunteer programs in particular.

Our association, as you know, is an association of project directors and we represent at the current time 70 percent of the directors across the country. From their thoughts and ideas and concerns, I wish to express these feelings and concerns to you this morning.

I would like to begin by addressing the issue of the authorization levels in your bill. First, we are greatly pleased at your interest in expanding the Senior Companion program and the home health care component. We at RSVP have worked with Senior Companion directors and have seen the program work in communities where it exists in the country. It is a strong and excellent program and deserves this kind of development to make it even more a nationwide program.

Second, a comment on the action of the administration authorization. I must say how seriously we are concerned with the administration budget that would, as Mr. Pauken has said earlier today, would require the closing of the field offices. It is from the field offices at the State level that we as project directors and the volunteer programs that we operate receive direct service from the ACTION Agency. It is very critical to us to see those offices maintained and be strong and of service to us. We are pleased to see that your authorization level is the same as the current authorization level at $29 million.

We would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that perhaps the same approach could be taken regarding the authorization levels for the Retired Senior volunteer program and the Foster Grandparent program, namely, that you consider including the authorization level as the same authorization level currently in effect for this year, 1983, instead of at the funding level for the 1983 year.

Finally, on this matter, I would like to make a comment on the VISTA authorization. I will have further comments on it later in my testimony.

We are pleased that it is included for authorization instead of being phased out. However, we do feel, in order to maintain the program as a strong presence in the country, that it does deserve a higher level of authorization.

Moving on from these issues, Mr. Chairman, I would like to address three amendments that we addressed in our written statement before you. The first of these is a matter of serious concern that many directors have expressed to me, namely the problem of the local share requirement. The present act does speak of a 40- and 50-percent level of support required in the fourth and fifth and succeeding years. However, since 1976, by directive of ACTION,

projects across the country have been required to produce only a 30-percent level of support.

We are suggesting an amendment that would limit that required local support to 30 percent. We do so not because we want to pull back resources. Many of us have worked very hard to go beyond that and this is, in fact, what has happened over the years. But simply in these times when dollars are short at all levels and there is continuing competition for every single dollar from many needs in our communities, it is increasingly difficult to deal with requirements to go beyond where we are now, of course, there is the fact that many projects in many areas of the country have difficulty or are able only to meet the 30-percent level. So we do encourage an inclusion of our proposed amendment in the bill.

We are also concerned about comments that appear in the 1984 budget for RSVP, namely, that there will be an increase of 14,000 RSVP volunteers but no inclusion of an increase in budget for the program. When asked about this, ACTION staff testified before the House Appropriations Committee that this would come from increased local support.

In view of what I have already said, and in view of our experience, as the ones who would have to raise the local dollars, I say again we are concerned about being required to increase the number of volunteers with no increase in the Federal budget. We will do our best. However, we say let us be more realistic in these very difficult funding times.

In this connection, we also suggest a second amendment that provides a different approach to the problem, namely, an amendment and a separate authorization that would allow for a 50–50 challenge grant support for volunteers. Very simply, it would give volunteers or project directors an incentive to develop new ideas, new roles and new ways in which volunteers could serve in the community, seek local support and then, at the same time, seek a matching grant at the Federal level.

In a sense, it is the reverse of what we are talking about in the 30-percent local requirement. Instead of the local support where we match 30 percent to receive the Federal dollars, we are talking in this case about the separate authorization in a sense to have the Federal dollars match what we raise locally.

A third suggestion we have, I am very happy to say, Mr. Chairman, you have included in your bill. It involves the question of Federal control over non-Federal and other dollars that appear in the budget that are over the requirement share.

What we basically are dealing with here for projects and sponsors of projects is the need to build, because of the nature of RSVP, a public and private partnership at all levels. The Federal, the State, the county, the foundation, and the corporation, the service club, wherever resources are available. This is especially true of RSVP.

We are concerned about more restrictive and more controlling effort on the part of the current administration in ACTION to limit the use of dollars no matter what their source or no matter what level of support exists in the program. This has come to the point at which we see encouragement to do double budgeting. In other words, one budget is for items that ACTION will accept; a

second budget is for items or levels of funding that ACTION do not find acceptable but which we at the local level must deal with in terms of legitimate expenses to operate effective and quality programs.

We thank you for including this amendment in your bill.

We have addressed other topics in our written statement. I would like to refer to one of them for a moment, and that is the subject of the VISTA program.

The National Association of RSVP Directors at its last two annual meetings, the most recent of which was in March of this year, strongly endorsed a resolution stating its clear support for this program. Many RSVP directors know the program directly in their own home communities, and I am aware of some directors who work side by side with VISTA volunteers in the same agencies. So we speak from experience in saying how valuable this program is.

It also offers a unique opportunity that none of our programs offer, namely it offers a full-time volunteer opportunity. Personally I have felt there should be a chance for a person who wishes to take a year and volunteer their service to the community to do so and to offer them a stipend to do it. To make it possible for them seems most laudable and a very good investment.

As we have already heard, many agencies really are helped far beyond what they can do with their own resources. So we strongly support this program and we encourage a higher level of authorization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to speak to you and I would be pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rummel and responses to questions asked follow:]

Testimony of the National Association of RSVP Directors
on the Re-Authorization of the Domestic Volunteer Services Act
before the Subcommittee on Family and Human Services
Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources
presented by James H. Rummel
April 22, 1983

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, my name is James Rummel and I am pleased to be here representing the National Association of RSVP Directors. We are a membership association of project directors and friends of RSVP. We represent 70% of the RSVP project directors across the country, and have joined together to provide visibility and advocacy on the national level for Retired Senior Volunteer Programs, communication on issues and ideas relevant to the membership, and representation for those served by RSVP, speaking on their behalf before national government bodies.

Mr. Chairman, we are pleased with your support of the Older American Volunteer Programs and your intent to extend their authorization for an additional three years.

We have several additional suggestions for amendments to the Domestic Volunteer Service Act that we hope you will consider including in your bill as it progresses through markup. We would be pleased to work with your staff in this regard. Our suggestions for changes include a modification of section 201(b) concerning local share requirements. Existing law permits a local share requirement of 50% from projects that have been in operation for five years or more. Actually, this provision was added to the bill several years ago to protect RSVP when a former Director wanted to phase out all federal support after the fifth year. But in practice, many projects are able to raise local share contributions of only up to 30%, although some can and do raise more than that amount. In the past, because of this reality, ACTION had not required more than a 30% contribution. But we are concerned by recent revised regulations issued by ACTION that point to a change in policy and open the door for requiring greater local share contributions that in most cases will be impossible for individual projects to obtain. To further support our concern, you will note that in the President's FY 1984 budget submission to Congress, ACTION indicates that it expects that an additional 14,000 RSVP volunteers will come into the program this year, although no new monies are provided. When asked about this at the House Appropriations Subcommittee several weeks ago, the ACTION Deputy Director responded that the additional volunteers would be supported by the "additional local share contributions" that the Agency expected.

Because of our concern that ACTION may be moving to require a greater percentage of local share contribution that may be unrealistic for projects in many areas of the country, we request that your bill include a provision to limit the local share requirement to 30% of the total cost of the project in the third year and beyond. This would bring the legislation into agreement with the policy that had been in effect since 1976.

Attempts to increase the local share levels now will put pressure on projects to raise more funds when such funds are increasingly scarce. In fact, some projects have experienced cuts in local funding. Increasing the local share requirement would mean that project directors would be spending more time fund-raising and less time operating the program. In 1976 ACTION completed a survey that indicated this very fact. We are unaware of any new survey carried out by ACTION that demonstrates a change in the situation of projects.

Mr. Chairman, this is not to say that project directors will not do all they can to look for additional sources of funding for RSVP. This brings me to the second amendment we would like to see added to your bill. We have discussed with your staff the concept of providing challenge grants for the Older American Volunteer Programs. This would entail a separate allocation of funds to be used specifically to match, on a 50 - 50 basis, new non-federal funds that are raised in local communities for the sole purpose of bringing new volunteers into the program. We would like to work with you on the details of this challenge grant concept as your bill moves through committee.

A third suggestion for change in the Act concerns the matter of federal control over the non-federal dollars. Fundamentally, all dollars in a project budget should be used to achieve the purpose of the program. However, we feel that allowance should be made for the local sponsor to have reasonable control over the line items of the budget especially in regard to the use of the non-federal dollars. Also, non-federal funding sources may wish to contribute funds for specific purposes such as volunteer reimbursement and recognition, or particular types of volunteer efforts and services that are still within the basic purpose of RSVP. Federal control should not be exercised in a manner that would arbitrarily restrict the local sponsor in the application for and use of non-federal dollars. We believe that allowances must be made for local needs, circumstances

and sponsor policies. Mr. Chairman, we believe it comes down to balancing the federal responsibility for federal dollars and local sponsor's need to manage a project in keeping with local policies, needs and funding opportunities. Finally, we are most concerned about present policies and actions by the administration that appear to encourage double budgeting -- one budget for what ACTION will allow, and another budget for items or cost levels ACTION will not allow, but local sponsors deem to be necessary. For sponsors, especially government agencies, double budgeting or off-budgeting of items may be illegal or at least contrary to accepted accounting procedures.

To address this issue we suggest that a new section be added to Part D. The section would state that non-federal funds over and above the required local share be the responsibility of the sponsor and the non-federal sources of those funds. We will be recommending to your staff specific language for the amendment.

Also we suggest that the Committee may wish to include in its report the following language:

> The Committee is concerned about efforts to achieve low cost levels in programs that will result in double budgeting. Project budgets should reflect the true cost of the program. ACTION cost policies should give due consideration to the variations that will necessarily exist in a national program. For example, salary levels will vary according to the type of sponsor, local community salary standards and local sponsor personnel policies. Policies and procedures that would result in low salary levels or restrictions on local sponsor personnel policies including training may in the short term save dollars. However, high levels of staff turnover and poorly trained staff will result in poorly managed projects and prove to very costly in the long term.
>
> Also volunteer reimbursement needs are known to vary according to type of volunteer assignment, local transportation costs, and area served by the project (rural or urban project).
>
> Finally, consideration should be given to non-federal funding sources' right to contribute to OAVP projects according to their own guidelines and perception of community need.
>
> Since OAVP projects are required to have a local share, full consideration by ACTION should be given to the partnership that must exist between the federal administration, the local sponsor and the local community that provides the non-federal share of project support.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise several issues of concern to our Association regarding the way the ACTION agency has carried out its responsibility for implementing the Domestic Volunteer Service Act. I will highlight for you the nature of these concerns. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have on this matter. The issues of concern to us are the following:

Mr. Chairman, late last year the ACTION Agency attempted to close 16 State Offices. The Older American Volunteer Programs Associations, including RSVP, opposed those closings, and the Congress responded to our concerns by prohibiting the use of funds provided in the Continuing Resolution to implement the proposed ACTION RIFs in State field offices. ACTION's fiscal year 1984 budget estimate includes a figure for program administration which is $7.7 million less than what was appropriated last year. The budget narrative indicates that 144 full-time positions will be eliminated in the ACTION Agency in fiscal year 1984 under this budget request. [See ACTION 1984 Budget Estimate] One-hundred-thirty of these positions are to be in the field. Several weeks ago, ACTION Director Thomas Pauken testified at the House Appropriations Subcommittee hearing that the Administration's FY 1984 budget request for agency administration would likely mean the closing of all the ACTION field offices. We are most concerned about this prospect. State program officers have over the years provided us with needed technical assistance and support in the carrying out of our projects. They have been invaluable to us in assisting us in obtaining State and local funding for our programs. They have been helpful to us in networking with other aging organizations within our State. We feel that the elimination of the State offices would severely cripple our programs. We will be asking the Appropriations Committee to provide additional funding for ACTION's program administration in the FY 1984 budget. However, Mr. Chairman, I know that because of your interest in oversight of the ACTION Agency, you will want to know of our position regarding the proposed closings of the State offices, and we hope that you will do all you

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can to help us with the Appropriations Committee in providing sufficient funding for ACTION Agency administration so that the closing of these State offices can be avoided.

Mr. Chairman, in fiscal year 1982, nearly 200 ACTION employees suffered a Reduction in Force at a cost exceeding $1 million to the Agency. Last year another 24 employees were let go. Many more employees would have suffered a RIF had it not been for the prohibition against use of funds to implement this RIF that I referred to earlier. And you know for fiscal year 1984, the Agency is proposing another 144 employees be RIFfed. What concerns us is the fact that while these RIFs are being implemented, ACTION has employed Presidential appointees, non-career SES employees, Schedule B and C employees, and employees in temporary positions as experts and consultants. We are concerned about the proliferation of political hires in the ACTION Agency. We feel that political hires should be limited no matter which administration is in office. For this reason, Mr. Chairman, we are asking that you include in your reauthorization bill a provision similar to that expressed in the House Appropriations Committee report of last year which would limit the number of political hires to 5% of the total employment for the ACTION Agency. We feel that much more reliance should be made on seasoned employees with experience with our programs rather than on political appointments.

Mr. Chairman, the National Association of RSVP Directors has consistently supported VISTA over the years. We applaud the decision of Congress to continue funding for the program. We view VISTA as a valuable program. It provides a much needed opportunity for individuals including older Americans to volunteer full time. In addition, many VISTA volunteers have been assigned on joint projects with RSVP volunteers. We know firsthand of the worth of this program and we are in opposition to the plan to eliminate VISTA. VISTA offers a very unique opportunity for individuals to volunteer different than that provided by

the Older American Volunteer Programs. Volunteers work full time and are stipended. Such volunteers, recruited and placed in the local community, offer valuable and much needed assistance to programs serving poor and needy persons. We hope that your bill will reauthorize VISTA and that you will support funding for this program in 1984. We feel that the program budget has been cut drastically in the past two years. We feel that the VISTA authorization should be maintained at its present level as a bare minimum for 1984 and allow for maintaining a strong program with room for development and growth.

We understand that consideration is being given to the idea of part time VISTA volunteers. Some questions arise regarding this idea. Would such volunteers receive a stipend? What is the definition of part time? How would such volunteers be distinquished by Older American Volunteers?

Mr. Chairman, the National Association of RSVP Directors is deeply concerned about the termination of funding by ACTION for the New York State Foster Grandparent Program. Specifically, we are concerned about the impact this will have on the Foster Grandparents and the children. Our concern is increased because to date we have been unable to find a clear reason for the termination of the project's funding. The entire episode seems to be long on rhetoric and short on specifics. The one issue ACTION has repeatedly brought forward has been the high cost of the project. But the high cost is to New York State not ACTION. It seems to use that a state is within its rights to use its funds as it sees fit. Already ACTION has had the provide an additional $250,000 for the new grantees. This demonstrates that decentralization will not lower ACTION's costs, but increase them because of increases in administration. Also, we are aware of the fact that the work of some of the Foster Grandparents with the child-en has been disrupted. Mr. Chairman, we feel that future developments in these areas should be monitored.

Finally, we are concerned that the New York Foster Grandparent Program is in large part an example of ACTION's overriding desire to exert unwarranted control over projects and project costs without regard for the rights of the local sponsor and non-federal funding sources. We, unfortunately, see a concern for achieving low-cost at any price without regard to quality of programming, with little respect for local initiative and needs, and also at the expense of the people for whom the program is designed.

On the positive side, I must say that the ACTION leadership has repeatedly expressed its support for the Older American Volunteer Programs, and that Betty Brake, former Older American Volunteer Program Director and current Deputy Director of the Agency, has been most willing to listen to the views of the Associations on matters of importance to us. On the whole, Mr. Chairman, our membership supports ACTION and the concept of having a Federal Agency focal point for volunteer programs.

Thank you for including the National Association of RSVP Directors among your witnesses today, Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

National Association of
Retired Senior Volunteer Program
Directors, Inc.
[redacted]
3614 Bryant Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55409

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June 7, 1983

The Honorable Jeremiah Denton
United States Senator
Committee on Labor and Human Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Denton:

Thank you again for inviting me to testify before the Subcommittee on Family and Human Services on April 22 on behalf of the National Association of RSVP Directors.

I offer the following response to your question:

> "Did the National Association of Project Directors receive any direct indication from ACTION that the required local match would increase above 30%?"

ACTION published in the Federal Register, Vol. 47, No. 212, Tuesday, November 2, proposed rules which would incorporate the present legislation on the local share requirement into the regulations. Our interpretation of this step is that the current policy requiring a 30% local share in the third year and beyond will be changed by the proposed regulation. Taken together with the increase of 14,000 volunteers shown in the ACTION 1984 budget and ACTION statement in testimony before the House Appropriations Committee that the increase will come about from increased local funds we see an unwelcome federal effort to increase the local match above 30%. Under present policy many RSVP projects have successfully achieved a local share above the 30%. They have done this on their own local initiative in accord with the local circumstances and availability of funds.

Also, it should be noted that since the ACTION budget shows no increase for RSVP the presumption is that the local projects must raise or absorb all the costs simply to maintain the programs and volunteers at status quo. The Congressional Budget Office has indicated that it would take a 4.5% increase in funds to maintain RSVP and the Older American Volunteer Programs.

It is for these reasons that we have requested that the legislation be amended to require a local share of 30% in the third year and all succeeding years. Again, I stress that project directors will continue to av il themselves of every opportunity to increase local funding. However, we wish it to be on local initiative and in accord with local circumstances.

Thank you for your support of RSVP. I look forward to continuing our work with you and your excellent staff on the reauthorization of ACTION and the programs it administers.

Sincerely,

James H. Rummel

James H. Rummel
President

JHR:vms

Senator DENTON. Thank you, Mr. Rummel.

Mrs. Miller.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you.

On behalf of the National Association of Foster Grandparents Program Directors, I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

The association supports the Hatch-Denton bill which authorizes Domestic Volunteer Services Act.

We would like to suggest a few changes. Under title II, the National Older Americans volunteer programs, the association supports an amendment that when a mentally retarded person reaches the age of 21, they may continue to have a foster grandparent as long as it is in their best interest, even if a new foster grandparent needs to be assigned. This, by the way, was in Congressman Andrews' bill. The association would like to see a new demonstration component of challenge grants for the Older Americans volunteer programs, which would involve funds over and above those already allocated. If local projects raised funds for the purpose of adding additional volunteers, ACTION would have a fund to match moneys on a 50-50 basis.

We would like to see this as a way to stimulate local funding but it would never be a substitute for regular increases.

Under section 201 we would like to see it changed to require that there be no more than 30 percent of local share for RSVP programs. We are concerned that if programs are required to raise 50 percent local share, many may not be able to continue.

Under title IV, administration and coordination, there are several changes we would like to see made. We would like to eliminate the two associate-director positions in the current act. We feel that the current agency structure is a holdover from when the Peace Corps was a part of ACTION. Currently there is an associate director for domestic and antipoverty operations and an associate director for international operations. Since the Peace Corps is no longer in ACTION, both these positions and offices could be eliminated.

In the House bill authorized by Congressman Murphy, he has elevated the Director of OAVP position.

Under section 412, we would like to add "and, except that employment of Presidential appointees, noncareer SES employees, schedule B and C employees and level GS-8 and higher employees in temporary positions employed as experts and consultants shall not exceed 5 percent of the total employment for ACTION."

In section 412, which provides opportunity for hearings when projects are no longer refunded, we would like to add new paragraphs.

No. 1, we would like "An application for refunding under this act shall not be denied unless the recipient has been given reasonable notice and opportunity in a full and fair administrative hearing before an impartial hearing officer to show cause why such action should not be taken."

No. 2, "No grant shall be reduced from current levels unless the recipient has been given reasonable notice and opportunity to show cause why such action should not be taken; unless the amount of reduction is 1 percent or less of the current grant."

No. 3, "Assistance under this act shall not be terminated for failure to comply with applicable terms and conditions unless the re-

cipient has been afforded reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing before an impartial hearing officer."

No. 4, "All rights of due process shall apply in all hearings prescribed in this section."

Currently ACTION promulgates policies and criteria which are not published in final form but which are nonetheless used as directives for programs to follow. We have been promised by the last two administrations that new Foster Grandparents Program Operations Handbooks for Sponsors were going to be published. This administration is also saying new regulations are being printed. In the meantime, ACTION is operating with their policies and memoranda only. The lack of a clear policy for the last 5 years gives unfair advantage to the administration and puts the grassroots program at a decided disadvantage.

We would like to add to section 416(a), "Such evaluations must be based on regulations currently in effect and prescribed in accordance with section 420 of this act."

Section 420(a) we would like to see changed—we would like "the term 'regulation' means any rule, regulation, guideline, criteria, interpretation, order, policy, or * * *"

We would like to add to section 420(c)(1) "Any recipient of a grant under provisions of this Act shall not be held liable for compliance with any regulations which fails to conform to the provisions of this section."

We would also like to add, and we are glad to see it is in this bill, the section which states that "non-ACTION funds over and above the required local support be the responsibility of the sponsor and the non-ACTION source of those funds." We would be recommending to your staff specific language.

Finally, we would like to enumerate some programmatic concerns of the association. We are concerned about ACTION's attempt to close offices, State offices for programmatic support where technical support is greatest, and we are glad to see that in your bill you are authorizing a level of $29 million for ACTION's administration.

We have a concern about the decentralization of statewide programs. The association would like to see an amendment to the act which states, "The Director shall not reduce or remove funding to any grantee operating over an area in a State more comprehensive than one community without the prior consent of Congress."

The association is concerned about the way the closing of the New York OMR/DD Foster Grandparents program was handled. We feel that the prime concern of all should have been the Foster Grandparents and the children they served. The association is not attempting to judge whether ACTION or OMR/DD was right or wrong, but we feel that a great disservice was done to the older persons and young children we are supposed to be protecting.

The association has a general concern that due process may not have been concerned in this instance.

In conclusion, I would like to say that even though we as an association continue to support ACTION as the agency through which the Older Americans volunteer programs should continue to be administered, there are many areas that must be improved.

I would like to urge a higher authorization for the Foster Grandparents program at the current level of $52,650,000 for our 1984 and subsequent years, additional authorization for challenge grants.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Miller and response to questions asked follow:]

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Honorable Jeremiah Denton, Chairman
Subcommittee on Family and Human Services
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to present testimony in regard to reauthorization of the Older Americans Volunteer Programs under the administration of the ACTION agency.

My name is Betty Miller and I am testifying on behalf of the National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors, having been accorded the honor of serving as that organization's president. I also hold the position of Older Americans Volunteer Programs Director for the State of California Department of Developmental Services which oversees 9 projects made up of 560 Foster Grandparents and 115 Senior Companions.

The Association welcomes this opportunity to share with you some of the important aspects of this Program and a few of the recommendations and concerns we have for enhancing its quality and future administration.

This is the 18th year of the Foster Grandparent Program's operation. I have been privileged to be involved with it for over 16 years and feel confident in saying the Program has been successful. I firmly believe that this Program is one which is saving and enhancing the lives of both senior citizens and children.

The Foster Grandparent Program has meant that developmentally disabled children in large institutions receive that valuable element — person-to-person attention. This attention is the bridge that rescues these children from dull, routine, group-orientated activities; loneliness; and unfamiliarity with "normal" community activities. Foster Grandparents are providing individualized attention in all types of settings: schools, detention homes, training centers, hospitals, day care centers, and private homes.

When Foster Grandparents provide their special love and care to children with special needs, small miracles happen. Reports from staff indicate children who have never talked, learn to talk; children who have never walked, are now walking; children not eligible for school in the past, are now going to classes regularly with their Foster Grandparent accompanying them; children who have been fearful and hesitant to trust adults, look forward to the Grandparent's visits and throw their arms around them in greeting. Children who have a strong need for love and acceptance, who have been abused or in trouble with the law, find Grandparents accept them without reservations.

The benefit of the Program is not for the children alone, Foster Grandparents also benefit. They now have meaningful activities, they feel needed and wanted, and no longer feel lonely and isolated. Their physical, mental and emotional health improves after they have been with the Program for a couple of months. Many of them say "This Program gives me a reason to get up in the morning."

I am certain that every Project Director has seen tremendous changes in the Grandparents after they have been in the Program for a while. They begin to dress better, eat better, and take better care of themselves. The Foster Grandparents keep themselves younger and healthier. Incidently, you might be interested to know that the oldest Foster Grandparent in my Program is 98 years young.

One Foster Grandparent said, "I like to think my youthfulness has been expanded in a new direction. I have a greater interest in child welfare. Spending part of the day out-of-doors with the children keeps me feeling well, and (having) fewer financial worries has meant less strain."

The Foster Grandparent Program demonstrates to society something which is very positive: older persons are a "natural resource" that must not be wasted. They can make an outstanding contribution to the health and development of communities. Grandparents are an irreplaceable resource in agencies throughout the country. Thousands of children in America are living in hospital wards, receiving homes, public welfare facilities, and orphanages; and large numbers of retarded and emotionally disturbed children under age 21 are included. The majority of institutions lack funds or staff to provide more than basic physical care for these children. One child care worker may be responsible for feeding as many as 20 children and therefore has no time to hold or cuddle them. In other institutions, especially those for developmentally disabled children, one staff person may care for 15 to 20 children. Many of these children have passed from one foster home to another before being placed in an institution. Most of these children have never had an adult friend or visitor. Others have known only custodial care all of their lives. Some of these children will eventually be returned to their homes and others will be placed in foster homes, but the waiting period is prolonged. This period of isolation from affection can have a disastrous effect on infants and young children. A child in his or her own home usually sees, plays, or visits with his or her parents for about four hours a day. An institutionalized child, on the other hand, has fewer than two hours of adult attention per day, and most of this is impersonal or routine.

Institutionalized children of all ages progress more rapidly when they receive a portion of the love and attention a child normally receives in his own home. This love and attention is the most important part of the Foster Grandparent Program. The ways the children benefit from their relationship with the Foster Grandparent are as infinitely varied as the ways a person can show he cares, that he is concerned about another. It may be a special greeting in the morning, bringing a favorite toy, helping with homework, or accompanying a child to a clinic appointment. The deed is not important—it is the feeling behind the deed that makes the act assume real importance.

Foster Grandparents have learned new skills and techniques to meet the needs of their assigned children. Some have learned sign language, taken awareness training for the blind, learned special feeding techniques for the developmentally disabled, studied psychology, or learned how to aid children in vocational training.

This Program is beneficial for the old and the young. It is doing a job in a cost-effective manner. Its continuance and expansion is important to both the low-income, isolated elderly and their children with special needs everywhere. Presently there are only 18,100 Foster Grandparents serving over 37,000 children in various settings throughout the nation. This is only a small portion of the persons that should be involved in the Program.

The Association supports the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Services Act. We would like to suggest a few changes.

TITLE I - NATIONAL VOLUNTEER ANTIPOVERTY PROGRAMS. We recommend changes in the VISTA Program that would: 1) mandate that VISTA volunteers work to generate private sector resources and part-time volunteers at the local level; 2) expand the categories of VISTA service to include assistance to abused persons, the elderly, homeless people and troubled youth, and to promote intergenerational programs; 3) mandate that a minimum of 20% of all VISTA volunteers shall be older persons [this provides opportunities for full-time stipended volunteer work for older Americans]; and 4) add a provision stipulating that at least 20% of the projects funded under VISTA must have as a specific program focus, assistance to low-income older persons.

TITLE II - NATIONAL OLDER AMERICANS VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS. Under this Title we recommend the following changes: Section 201(b) should be changed to require no more than 30% of local share RSVP contributions for RSVP Projects. Current law allows up to 50% local share, but in reality most projects are unable to reach this level. We are concerned that if RSVP Projects are required to raise 50% local shares, many of them may be unable to continue.

The Association supports an amendment that when a mentally retarded person reaches the age of 21 they may continue to have a Foster Grandparent as long as it is in their best interest, even if a new Foster Grandparent needs to be assigned. The majority of us who deal with the mentally retarded want to see all age limitations removed, but this amendment would be an improvement.

Another amendment we would like to see added to the Older Americans Volunteer Programs would be the provision of challenge grants. There would be an additional account of funds authorized to provide, on a 50-50 matching basis, grants to local projects that were able to raise funds over and above any local share requirement for the sole purpose of increasing the number of volunteers in the projects. We feel this would stimulate the addition of funds from private sector sources.

TITLE IV - ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION. There are several changes we would like to see made in this Title: 1) in the first sentence, which establishes ACTION, we would like a purpose clause: "For the purpose of providing a focal point for volunteers in the Federal Government."; and 2) we would like to eliminate the two Associate Director positions in the current Act and specify that the four presidential appointees shall be the Director of ACTION, the Deputy Director, an Associate Director whose responsibility should include

VISTA, and an Associate Director whose responsibility should include the Older Americans Volunteer Programs. We feel that the current agency structure is a holdover from when the Peace Corps was a part of ACTION. Currently, there is an Associate Director for Domestic and Antipoverty Operations and an Associate Director for International Operations. Since the Peace Corps is no longer in ACTION, both these positins and offices could be eliminated.

Section 402(2)(a) add: "and, except that employment of presidential appointees, noncareer SES employees, Schedule B and C employees and level GS-8 and higher employees in temporary positions employed as experts and consultants shall not exceed 5% of the total employment for ACTION."

In Section 412, which provides opportunity for hearings when projects are no longer refunded, we would like to add new paragraphs.

1. An application for refunding under this Act shall not be denied unless the recipient has been given reasonable notice and opportunity in a full and fair administrative hearing before an impartial Hearing Officer to show cause why such action should not be taken.

2. No grant shall be reduced from current levels unless the recipient has been given reasonable notice and opportunity to show cause why such action should not be taken; unless the amount of reduction is one percent or less of the current grant.

3. Assistance under this Act shall not be terminated for failure to comply with applicable terms and conditions unless the recipient has been afforded reasonable notice and opportunity for a full and fair hearing before an impartial Hearing Officer.

4. All rights of due process shall apply in all hearings prescribed in this Section.

Currently, ACTION promulgates policies and "criteria" which are not published in final form, but which are nonetheless used as directives for programs to follow. We have been promised by the last two administrations that new Foster Grandparent Program Operations Handbooks for Sponsors were going to be published. This administration is also saying new regulations are being printed. In the meantime, ACTION is operating with their policies and memoranda only. The lack of a clear policy for the last five years gives unfair advantage to the administration and puts the grassroots program at a decided disadvantage.

We would like the following changes made:

- Add to Section 416(a): "Such evaluations must be based on regulations currently in effect and prescribed in accordance with Sectin 420 of this Act."

- Section 420(a) change: "(1) the term 'regulation' means any rule, regulation, guideline, criteria, interpretation, order, policy, or..."

- Add to Section 420(c)(1): "Any recipient of a grant under provisions of this Act shall not be held liable for compliance with any regulations which fails to conform to the provisions of this Section.

- Decentralization of statewide programs. The Association would like to see an amendment to the Act, Section 212(a) which adds a second paragraph: "The Director shall not reduce or remove funding to any Grantee operating over an area in a state more comprehensive than one community without the prior consent of Congress."

- Under Section 211 we would like to add Subsection (c): "The various states are authorized to establish separate and distinct programs described in Subsections (a) and (b) of this Section and to make grants or contracts with departments of states or other public and nonprofit private agencies and organizations to pay part of all of the cost of the development and operation of such projects provided that such programs are established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this Act and are not in conflict or competition with federally-funded programs prescribed in Subsections (a) and (b) of this Section."

  All reference to "Director" in this Section shall also be construed as being applicable to the various states.

- Add to Section 418: "This provision shall extend to benefits provided by totally state-sponsored and state-funded programs which are paid to persons serving pursuant to Title II and Title III of this Act."

Finally Mr. Chairman, let me enumerate for you some additional administrative and programmatic concerns of the National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors:

- ACTION's policy of reducing grants by the prior year's unexpended balance does not take into consideration that a Grantee may have an unusual situation for the year such as: a hiring freeze, a freeze on purchasing supplies, or delays in finding staff replacements.

- Apparently without intending, long-standing, proven successful programs are being vandalized by ACTION to fund new, also worthy, programs due to the tight budget. The new initiatives for the Foster Grandparent Program tend to: detract from long-standing priorities, such as care of the mentally retarded; and require monies which are recouped from existing programs. The existing programs are facing an ever growing need for increased transportation and administrative funds. Long-standing programs cannot begin to fill the many requests they have for Foster Grandparents.

- When ACTION attempted in 1982 to close state offices due to a "shortage" of administration funds, Congress intervened and prevented it. ACTION's 1984 budget proposal has again incorporated this reduction in administration costs. The state offices are where the programmatic support and technical assistance is the greatest.

The Association is concerned about the way the closing of the New York OMR/DD Foster Grandparent Program was handled. We feel that the prime concern of all should have been the Foster Grandparents and the children they served. The Association is not attempting to judge whether ACTION or OMR/DD was right, but we feel that a great disservice was done to the older persons and young children we are supposed to be protecting.

In conclusion, I would like to say that even though we as an Association continue to support ACTION as the agency through which the Older Americans Volunteer Programs should continue to be administered, there are many areas that must be improved. We call upon Congress to insure these improvements are made.

Thank you

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DENTON

1.) Did the National Associations of Project Directors receive any direct indication from ACTION that the required local match would increase above 30 percent?

1. ACTION has not given an indication that the required local match would increase above 30 percent, but there is a concern that as long as the 40 and 50 percent match is still in the Act there is the potential for a problem.

2. There is a need to increase the funding level for the Foster Grandparent Program to at least 35 percent by the year 2000. This would allow at least 7,700 additional Foster Grandparents to serve. Even with the budget problems the nation is facing, it is more economical to keep older persons active and being of service to their communities. The Foster Grandparent Program has shown that being involved decreases health problems for the elderly. The services they provide for the children they work with is greater than the small cost for each elderly volunteer.

Senator DENTON. Thank you, Mrs. Miller.

We will certainly stay in touch with you on all of those recommendations, and I can assure you that I will do everything that I personally can, starting right now, on the 21-year-old or older if he is mentally retarded.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you.

Senator DENTON. Mr. Pribyl.

Mr. PRIBYL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is John Pribyl and I have the pleasure of representing the 76 Senior Companion programs across the country today as we talk about the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

I want to begin my testimony by expressing to you and to Senator Hatch my grateful appreciation for the support for the Senior Companion program by your introducing the home health component of additional $12 million in the authorization limit, making the total authorization $24 million for the Senior Companion program.

I assure you that if we had more Senior Companions we would definitely have an impact on the in-home care that is needed for the senior citizens in this country. I am grateful to have the opportunity if this measure gets put into law to put that into effect and to show you firsthand how the Senior Companions can keep people in their own home at a very low cost-effective manner.

I want to thank also Mr. Pauken for his personal support for this addition to the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

I would like to get into some other things on legislation but before that just a couple of issues I would like to bring up with regard to policies that are currently operating in some parts of the country with regard to the ACTION Agency.

The first thing I would like to mention is the salary cap issue that is currently being implemented in some parts of the country. Certain regions are putting a $14,000 to $16,000 limit on the Federal dollar figure that can be used for the project director's salary. They are saying that the only way the project director can put additional dollars into a salary is if that comes from a nongovernmental source. My personal experience with that is that it is much easier to raise the non-Federal dollars for the Senior Companion benefits than it is to go to an agency and say I need additional non-Federal dollars for my salary. I think it is an extremely bad way to try to raise money and to do fund raising.

I am also very concerned that the project directors that have been around for, in some cases, 14 to 16 years directing Foster Grandparent programs, RSVP programs, and Senior Companion programs over the last 9 years, they would have a limit of $14,000 and we would be starting up Vietnam veteran leadership programs and recommending a salary of $25,000 to $28,000 of all Federal dollars for these particular programs. It just does not seem fair to the directors across the country when they see this kind of treatment with regard to the salary schedules. We would ask that you check into that matter for us.

Second, we have a concern with regard to how household income is determined for the volunteers that are placed. As you know, Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents have to meet an

income requirement to be eligible for the stipend in the program, and the policy is that all income in a particular household has to be counted to determine that eligibility. And we are coming across situations today where that is very difficult to do. Mainly with the Indian population where the Indian customs are to have many members living in the same household, and if there happens to be a younger person in the household that earns additional money that they use completely for themselves, it does not go to the older person, that still has to be counted in determining that older person's eligibility for the program. The same thing is happening with the Mexican American, and now the same thing is happening again with the Asians and especially among the population in our State that come in and want to be a part of the program. They are not eligible because we have to count the whole household income. We would ask you to take a look at that matter.

The Association of Senior Companion Directors would also recommend the elimination of the Advisory Council that was spoken about earlier in the administration's testimony. The administration mentioned one of the things the Advisory Council did was to recommend selection of the recipients for the Presidential volunteer awards. I would like to recommend that these three associations take on that opportunity of selecting the recipients since we are the people that work directly with the volunteers on the grassroots level, and many project directors are involved in that on the local level, and that would not cost any Federal dollars because our associations do not operate with any Federal funds.

Now, as we get into the particulars of the legislation, the Senior Companion Directors also would like to support your current authorization level for the administration of 29 million, and we do that because we see the State office structure as extremely important in the ACTION Agency. The State office people are the people we have firsthand contact with. They give us the technical assistance to operate our programs.

I would also support higher authorization levels for the Foster Grandparents and RSVP programs, authorization levels that are currently in effect, instead of the ones that are in the bill that we are looking at today.

The Senior Companion Directors also support the maximum 30 percent local share that is recommended by the RSVP volunteers, and would also remind you that that does not terminate any volunteers, that that does not cut back on any current operations of RSVP Programs that happen to have more additional local share. We just look at that as a maximum requirement.

The Senior Companion Directors would like to ask you to delete the part-time authority for VISTA. We have some concern over whether that—if that part-time authority were in there for the VISTA program, if there would be some misunderstanding with regard to RSVP volunteers who work part time and VISTA volunteers. They would see them as a completely different type of volunteer that I see a need for in the community, but I see a real need for that full-time role that the VISTA volunteers take.

The Senior Companion Directors also support an increase in the stipend. The last time the stipend for the volunteers was raised was in 1978. It went to $2 an hour. We are asking that that stipend

increase go to $2.20 an hour. We support also a challenge grant amendment, and this is not a substitute for the current program growth that we hope will take place throughout the years, but we see it as another way to go out and fund raise for the programs.

I have the privilege of going to a foundation to ask them for dollars, and if I can tell them that the Federal Government will match their cash dollars dollar for dollar, that gives me a real fund raising edge in looking at additional ways to fund Senior Companions in other roles and giving more people the chance to become involved in the program.

I am very happy to see that in section 418 of your bill, that you include workers' compensation as one of the exclusions to make sure that there is no misunderstanding that volunteers, even though they receive a stipend, are not considered workers. If that goes through, that will save the Minnesota Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent programs $16,000 in 1 year. Our current premium for workers' comp is $16,000, and it is obviously a duplication because we are mandated to carry the CIMA accident insurance which provides better coverage at $361. There is just no comparison.

Again the CIMA coverage covers portal to portal. Workers' comp does not cover the volunteer when they leave their home. It only covers the volunteer when they are at the service site.

Thank you very much for that inclusion in the bill.

Finally, I would like to mention the item that the other two directors mentioned, and that is the local control of funds. I am very happy to see in section 224 that you have included that there would be more flexibility with regard to the non-ACTION funds that would be raised above and beyond the 10 percent that is mandated for the Senior Companion program.

I would like to end by giving you a couple of examples in how that would help our particular situation. We have a very unique situation where we have a joint State-Federal Senior Companion program and have excellent cooperation between the State and Federal Government on the local level with the program. I would just like to see that keep going, and in my case the State government puts in more money than the Federal Government to the Senior Companion program. This last year when I was writing the grant for the Senior Companion program, I put in a line item amount to go to the State Agency Conference which is a required thing on the part of the State of Minnesota that we would attend their training conference once a year. The cost of that training conference, the total cost was $35. And to be able to get permission to go to that conference, I had to go through bureaucracy from the State to the regional all the way to Washington to get an OK to be able to spend $35 which was way above and beyond the actual 10 percent needed as match to the grant, to spend that amount of money. I would just hope that would be in there.

Another thing that would give us a privilege to do would be additional staff training. If we could put additional staff training in our budget, which is a statewide program, to get the staff together once a year for very low cost training session, we would be able to do that if we had some flexibility with that additional non-ACTION funds. Mr. Pauken mentioned several times in his testimony how

he strongly believes in local control for these programs, and I think this particular amendment would definitely endorse that local control.

One final thing would be that in our particular case, and many programs across the country we are not allowed to give reimbursement to the Senior Companion when that Senior Companion escorts a volunteer—I mean escorts a client to the doctor for some particular reason. Granted there are other services that can provide transportation for some clients to get to the doctor. But in some cases there is no other way a Senior Companion would do everything for the client in that 20-hour week but they cannot take them to the doctor. They cannot transport them and be reimbursed for it from our project funds. We would hope that this flexibility in this section would give us a chance to do that.

Thank you. This concludes my testimony and I thank you very much for the privilege to be here, and thank you again very much for including the home health care component. And I will be very glad to answer any questions that you have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pribyl and responses to questions asked follow:]

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April 12, 1985

Senator Jeremiah Denton, Chairman Subcommittee on Family
and Human Services
Comittee on Labor and Human Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Denton,

Attached is the Testimony from the National Association of Senior Companion Project Directors respresenting our views on the Reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

I want to take this time to personally thank you and Senator Hatch for your tremendous support for Senior Companions by doubling the authorization for our budget.

I realize that these are difficult times for our economy but I share your strong belief that Senior Companions can and will make a difference in our health care system if they are given the chance to share their friendship, caring and love with the isolated seniors in our country.

Thanks again for your tremendous support and I look forward to seeing you again on April 22.

Sincerely,

John F. Pribyl
President, NASCPD.

(enclosure)

SCP

TESTIMONY

Presented to the SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES
on Friday, April 22, 1983.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

On behalf of the Senior Companion Programs across the country, I would like to thankyou for this opportunity to express our opinions concerning the Senior Companion Program and its funding Agency, ACTION.

As you know SCP is the smallest of the three Older American Volunteer Programs in ACTION with only 76 programs across the country. Even though we are currently small in numbers we see a great potential for growth because of the already successful cost effective track record that has been established in the 9 years that SCP has been in existence. With the cost of institutional care continually rising the need for low cost in-home care is extremely important.

Today I would like to divide my testimony into two parts: Oversight issues and Legislative issues.

Beginning with the oversight issures I would ask this committee to examine the following issues:

A. Termination of funding for the OMRDD Foster Grandparent Program in New York State.

64% of the SCP Directors responding to a recent survey felt that the FGP grant was terminated as a retaliatory measure against the Director of the program who happened to be the FGP Association President. The SCP directors felt that after looking at the chain of events that occurred in leading up to this termination of a grant that some sort of compromise would have been in the best interest of the Foster Grandparents and the children they serve. This confrontation seems to have begun with a proposed 19% reduction in the FGP grant during the spring of 1982.(As far as our Association knows there was no site visit conducted using the monitoring tool and there was no audit of the program conducted.) The next step was to deny funding.

Our Association is most concerned about the status of the Foster Grandparents and their children. Are all of these Grandparents still serving the same clients under a new grantee? Why were the new grantees given short funding periods to carry on the grant? (The longest being only 4 months).

If the reason for termination of the OMRDD grant was high administration costs, how can ACTION justify spending $250,000 more for this project with the new grantees?

Finally another result of this termination was the discontinued funding by the state for the Senior Companion Program. Was all this worth it? We would appreciate some answers to these concerns.

B. Prior year fund balance regulations

The SCP directors are quite concerned about the Policy for Control of Prior Year Grant Balances. We agree that this item should be closely monitored and that if a project is consistently underspending their grant with no excuse then some adjustments should be made. Our concern with this policy is that there does not seem to be any flexibility or room for valid reasons why in a particular year a program may underspend. One brief example could be if a project director resigns and there is a delay in the hiring process for a replacement. The lost salary alone could be enough to penalize a program's annualized level. We are simply asking for some common sense treatment and flexibility on this issue, so that the powers that be realize this is a people program and unforeseen changes do occur.

C. Salary Caps

There still seems to be some regions that are putting a salary cap on the amount of federal dollars that can be used for the director's salary. On the one hand ACTION says federal and non-federal dollars are to be treated the same way and that salary scales are to follow the grantee's policy, but then ACTION wants to limit the federal amount for salaries. This is particularly disturbing when the limit for OAVP programs director salaries is somewhere between $14,000 - $16,000 for federal dollars and then ACTION will approve a director's salary for their Vietnam Vet's program in the $25,000 -$28,000 range with all federal dollars. We question the consistency and fair treatment of the OAVP directors with this kind of policy.

D. Unspent fiscal '82 SCP program dollars returned to the treasury.

SCP directors are extremely concerned that SCP program funds for fiscal '82 were returned to the treasury and as a result our current appropriation levels have been decreased. Several project directors submitted requests at the end of the fiscal year to receive some of the unspent funds for very valid reasons and they were denied. Why were these requests,if valid, denied funding when the funds were available?

E. Volunteer Transportation and Client Transportation.

I am not sure if this issue is an oversight issue or a legislative issue, but transportation has been a never ending concern with the SCP programs. The main problem seems to be that in many cases a client of an SC needs transportation to a Doctor etc. and there is no other resource available so the Senior Companion ends up providing the transportation at their own expense because under current policy program funds cannot be used for client activities. I can see the reason for this to a point but I also see a very strong need for an exception to this policy under certain circumstances. We expect an SC to provide friendship and support for a client and when the need for transportation arises we can't reimburse a low income senior for necessary client travel. Again it seems to me that a certain percentage of the travel line item could be allowed to be used for client activities and it is up to the director to manage it.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

A. Should OAVP remain with ACTION or transfer to Administration on Aging?

This same question was asked of the SCP directors in 1979 and the response was overwhelmingly in support of the ACTION Agency.
Today when the question is asked the response is as follows:

1. Positive support for ACTION.....44%
2. Prefer to transfer to AOA..... 7%
3. Prefer ACTION only because of negative feelings for AOA are stronger than negative feelings for ACTION..... 49%

As a result the ACTION agency is still the choice of the SCP directors mainly because of its strong concept for volunteerism and seeing seniors as a resource to a community. As you caon see from the above percentages there are many concerns as to how ACTION deals with individuals that causes distrust for the agency and makes a cooperative working relationship very difficult.
The Directors feel that the state office structure is the best part of the ACTION agency and is the one characteristic that distinguishes ACTION from other government agencies.

B. Support for VISTA

32% of the SCP directors support at least the current funding level for VISTA and they support the legislation requiring 20% of all VISTA's be older americans. 16% of the SCP directors oppose this and 52% have no opinion.

C. Stipend Increase

89% of the Directors responding were very positive about the proposed legislation to increase the stipend to $2.20 per hour. The 11% disapproving did so because they were concerned about the volunteers that they have that are funded from other sources and they did not know if they would be able to come up with additional non-federal dollars to increase those stipends. Secondly some of the 11% would rather see the opportunity for more SC positions for each program instead of the higher stipend.

D. Challenge Grants

82% of the Directors supported the concept of a Challenge Grant that would be a separate funding made available on a 50-50 match basis. This seems to be an excellent method to increase cooperation between the private and public sector.

E. Demonstration Grants

The majority of SCP directors would like more information with regard to Demonstration Components before they can support it completely. I did not have adequate information on this concept when I surveyed the directors. Now that I have had an opportunity to review the proposed concept in detail I am convinced that the majority of the directors support this concept and any other that will continue to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of SCP as an in-home alternative..

F. Administration Money

The SCP Association supports a change in the ACTION administrative structure since Peace Corps is removed. We support a change in section 401 of the act which would eliminate two Associate Director positions and specify that four Presidential appointees shall be the Director, the Deputy Director, an Associate Director whose responsibilities would include VISTA and an Associate Director whose responsibilities should include the OAVP programs.

The SCP Directors also support a limit as to the amount of salary dollars that can be used for non-career positions in the ACTION agency.

G. Denial of Funding

The SCP Directors support adding a phrase to section 412 of the act which would provide for a hearing before an impartial hearing officer before funding would be denied any program.

H. Worker's Compensation

Even though OAVP's are technically volunteers there are some states that still mandate programs to pay worker's compensation premiums on the volunteers in their program. Programs are required to do this even though ACTION has provided an accident insurance plan through CIMA at a very low rate.
We support a provision in the law to exclude volunteers from a "worker's law".

I. Control of Local Funds

In his testimony before the House Education and Labor Subcommittee on Human Resources, Mr. Tom Pauken, ACTION Director emphasized his strong belief in local control of the OAVP programs.
We also as project Directors share the imoortance of this belief and we would like to see it put into practice by giving the projects more control and flexibility with the local funds that are above and beyond the mandated necessary match for the program. In the case of SCP 10% local match must be generated for each grant. We would like to have some flexibility to use additional local funds in a way that better meets the needs of the local project.

This concludes the testimony of the National Association of Senior Companion Program Directors. Thank you for the opportunity to express our opinions and thoughts and if there is any additional information needed please feel free to contact us.
Again Thank you very much for your commitment to Senior Companions by increasing the Authorization levels to $24.M. If the appropriation committee agrees with that figure I guarantee you that you will see the cost effective impact that Senior Companions can have on the high cost of health care today.

National Association of Senior Companion Project Directors

President:
John F. Pribyl
3226 Lyndale Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN. 55408
612-827-5641

Vice President: Dorothy
[illegible] Fowlkes
[illegible]
[illegible], S.C. 29115

Secretary/Treasurer:
Nancy L. Doctor
P. O. Box 630
Owensboro, KY. 42302

June 6, 1983

Senator Jeremiah Denton
Chairman Subcommittee on Family and Human Services
United States Senate
Washington D.C., 20510

Dear Senator Denton,

Thankyou again for the opportunity to testify before your committee on the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and again thanks for your tremendous support for Senior Companions.

The questions you sent to me were the following:

> What is the average number of SCP programs in the States now?

There are currently 76 SCP programs across the country at this time. That amounts to approximately 1.5 programs per state. The large majority of programs serve a very small geographic area in each state which means that most of the country does not have the opportunity to benefit from this cost effective service.

> Is there a need to increase the number of programs and training component of the programs?

There is definitely a need to increase both of these at this time. With the small number of SCP projects at this time and the small geographic area that they serve I feel it is very difficult to perceive this program as a nationwide program. To expand the training component will help the SC's provide better service and stimulate them to use the talents and years of experience to assist the clients they serve.

> The new subsection in S. 1129 would provide for training for SCP volunteers to assist in case Management to provide initial needs assessment for SCP volunteer recipients. How is this type of case management currently being handled.?

I know of one program that is handling the case management approximately the same way as the new subsection is written. Most projects do not have the training expertise or the basic information to understand how the SC can be involved

in case management with necessary backup from professionals. I strongly believe that with the necessary preparation most SC's could end up providing much more service than many programs are currently expecting of them.

Thanks again for the opportunity to express the opinions of the National Association of SCP Directors.

Sincerely,

John F. Pribyl
President, NASCPD

Senator DENTON. Thank you, Mr. Pribyl.

We will be taking all of your recommendations under careful consideration and we will stay in touch with the three of you.

I understand that Mr. Pauken has answered lengthy questions from the House and from the Senate Appropriations Committee on the subject of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, which Mrs. Miller brought up. His answers appear to reflect that the Foster Grandparent program in New York was not closed but rather that new sponsors were found. All 551 Foster Grandparents in the State are serving in the programs under new sponsors.

I will submit written questions to Mr. Pauken on this subject but I will mention that when a Federal agency is dissatisfied with the use of Federal funds, it is the agency's duty beyond its right to find sponsors who will use those funds in the best interest of the program and the people that the program serves. The details of the change of sponsorship will be made part of the permanent record.

Some of you have mentioned—well, at least Mr. Pribyl has, his position on the home health care component that is added to the Senior Companion program. How about you, Mr. Rummel and Mrs. Miller, did you approve of that?

Mrs. MILLER. I would support it.

Senator DENTON. You would, too?

Mr. RUMMEL. Yes.

Senator DENTON. Well, you have raised so many questions that to attempt to answer them or to even discuss them at this hearing would be beyond the scope of the time we have, even were we to take the rest of the afternoon. Some of them look valid and I am not expert enough to judge any of them to be invalid.

I will say that in the case of the RSVP volunteers that if there were to be 14,000 RSVP volunteers added, and have that come out of the local moneys, and if they cost about 40 a year to the local community that that would be about one-half a million dollars nationwide or about $10,000 per State we are talking about in generating more money. I am not sure that that is not a realistic goal. We have been sort of stuck with that 30 percent in spite of aiming for the 40 or 50 and, as you say, perhaps it is impossible, and you say you will go ahead and try, but the tremendous deficits we now face must be dealt with. And existing law does permit a local share of 50 percent. That was part of a set of laws which were placed into

effect with expanding entitlements to the degree that now we have an almost insurmountable situation. I cannot give anything but praise to the programs represented by the three of you here today, and I do regard the programs as good investment of dollars.

I do believe, and would urge you to try to get some more of those dollars from the local level. It is there, the money is there. It is at a $1 trillion deficit and more at the Federal level right now. So we have got to try.

Thank you very much.

Senator Grassley has submitted an opening statement for the record. Without objection, it will be entered.

[The prepared statement referred to follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR GRASSLEY

Mr. Chairman, I commend you for your diligence in scheduling this hearing.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Aging within this committee, I have a strong interest in the Domestic Volunteer Service Act. The Older American volunteer programs administered by ACTION are authorized under title II of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended.

It goes without saying that in uniting the experience and skills of capable and mature older Americans with unmet community needs, the benefits are boundless. In a country where the work ethic is an ingrained ideal and a continuing measure of a person's contribution to society, the ability to work, to volunteer one's services, is often the link to self-esteem and a continuing sense of fulfillment. We must bolster the support system for the elderly and give them and society the opportunity to benefit in the process.

So often, we find ourselves in the position of appropriating funds for studies or task forces to find solutions to problems. In this instance, we are examining programs such as the foster grandparent program and the senior companion program. These programs have been tried and they have proved to be a success. I want to lend my support in whatever way possible to ensure their continued existence and success. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DENTON. Again thank you for your informative testimony. I know that you are qualified. I know that you are experienced; I know that you are well intended, and we intend to be as cooperative as possible in coming out with a realistic bill. Thank you very much.

At this point I order printed all statements of those who could not attend and other pertinent material submitted for the record.

[The material referred to follows:]

Senator DENTON. This hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.]

ROXBURY MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, INC.

Human Services For Human Development

317 BLUE HILL AVENUE, ROXBURY, MASS. 02121 (617) 427-4470

April 7, 1983

Mr. Daniel F. Bonner
Acting Director of VISTA
806 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20525

Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Vivian C. Male
President

Kenneth Haskins
Vice-President

Roy E. Mabiett
Treasurer

Sylvia Krakow
Clerk

Marilyn B. Anderson-Chase
Executive Director

Satellite Centers:

Youth Development Center
434 Warren Street
Roxbury, Mass. 02121

Day Activity Center
321 Blue Hill Avenue
Roxbury, Mass. 02121

United Way

abcd

Dear Mr. Bonner:

We would like to respond to several points raised in your letter of March 24th, denying our request for funding of our VISTA Food Coop Proposal:

1. The Mission Statement of the Roxbury Multi-Service Center (RMSC) reads as follows: "...to promote access to decent food, clothing, health, shelter, opportunities to education and employment and maximizing of individual potential for low-income, Black and other minority residents of Roxbury-North Dorchester specifically, and the Greater Boston area in general for purposes of helping that population become socially and economically independent by means of advocacy, direct services and economic development and education."

   The organization of mechanisms for the distribution and provision of low-cost, high-quality foods to the low- and moderate-income families of Roxbury-North Dorchester is a priority activity for the RMSC. We are seeing more and more single-parent, female-headed households as clients (who comprise a growing percentage of poor individuals and families across the country) in economic distress, facing loss of their homes, food stamps and other social service benefits who would be the ultimate beneficiaries of the food coop's services. With high unemployment and the loss of health benefits for many working families and with the elderly on fixed incomes, a source of high quality, nutritious fruit and produce for families or individuals facing "heat or eat" decisions here in the Northeast would lessen the burdens on the health care system and governmental medical assistance programs by helping to maintain a more healthy an and well-adjusted populace. (Improper diet and lack of proper nutrition is often the source of many ailments, including stress, which leads problem-ridden families to seek additional medical and social services.)

The operation of a food coop, moreover, requires members to actively take control and make operational and programmatic as well as personal decisions. It teaches basic business and organizational skills, requires a personal dedication to self-discipline, and demands a commitment to a work ethic that many have long-since discarded. The re-awakening and re-exposure to these ideals, then, cannot help but assist food coop participants in better self-management of their homes, budgets, families, and their lives in general in a more responsible manner.

2. We would not purport to deny that our proposal does not demonstrate overwhelming evidence of goal attainment. As project director, I purposefully wrote progress reports that indicated our attempts at successes, and our subsequent failures. I would first like to address two main problem areas that we encountered during the two program years (which we did discuss with our VISTA Program Monitor) and then offer ways that we propose to ameliorate these problems in the coming ACTION program year:

   a. Staff Considerations: Towards the end of our first program year, we lost the VISTA volunteer who had been the prime motivating and organizational force around the start-up, operation and expansion of the food coop, due to the tenuous position and potential demise of the ACTION agency and our inability to give the volunteer reasonable, hopeful answers regarding continuance of either ACTION or the food coop program. This loss was a sharp blow to the project, but it survived.

   By our second program year, we began with a practically new group of volunteers. (The term of each volunteer varied, so there was little ability to transfer knowledge and information to new volunteers in order to provide continuity and consistency to the project.) One of the major problems has been the time we have had available to hire good locally-recruited VISTAs (see my Progress Report of 10/1 to 12/31/82). This last program year, we had approximately one to two weeks available from when we received the green light to recruit and when we had to have identified VISTAs for the available slots. As you may be aware, it takes much longer than two weeks to recruit and screen the type of personnal that would be needed to make the project a success. As a result, although we needed bright, capable, committed, energetic and talented volunteers who could fulfill both VISTA's mission and ours, we wound up taking much less in order to fill the slots in the time allotted. Therefore, our second year project suffered considerably.

   Hiring and supervising VISTAs for a project such as this (that requires dedication, commitment and volunteers who require minimal supervision) is not the easiest task. First, the quality of volunteer you can recruit and hire is not likely to be top caliber unless an individual is personnally committed to the type of project you have. Secondly, there is little in the way of direct personnel actions that can be taken for infraction of Sponsoring Agency personnel policies other than a "slap on the wrist." Volunteers intent on "just getting by" know that their stipend checks come directly from Washington, and that they cannot be docked for poor work habits. The administrative hold procedure is lengthy, involves time-consuming bureaucracies and usually a slot vacated by a less-than-desirable

volunteer must remain vacant until the next program year. Thus, Agencies are forced to make a choice: Is having a bad volunteer worse than having NO volunteer? We have been forced to make this choice and have opted to keep a "bad" volunteer and try to apply as many punitive measures as possible (holding checks, requiring bi-monthly activity reports, etc.) in order to keep the food coop project operational at some level.

b. Programmatic Considerations: There were several programmatic areas in which we had little success in the last program year, for instance the establishment of a 10-member advisory council and the formation of a corporation. Initially, towards the middle of our first program year, by-laws and articles of incorporation were drafted and an advisory committee was formed and met regularly with the general membership. During our second program year, when re-elections were pending, we made several attempts--through mailings, personal calls, flyers, etc., to reunite the advisory committee and general membership to hold elections, all to no avail. For some reason, staff changes and operational/programmatic fluctuations seemed to cause apathy among members and organizing became difficult, and membership participation was minimal. We have come to the conclusion that operation and maintaining this type of project requires the maximum amount of effort possible, which in turn, requires committed and sincere volunteers.

We have taken several steps to insure a third successful program year:

1) Added additional direct supervision (donated by RMSC) for the VISTA volunteer staff;

2) There are now strict reporting requirements from VISTAs on project progress and daily work activities;

3) Funds have been requested from the State's Special Projects Fund for a food coop coordinator to supervise the entire operation (see attached proposal);

4) We continue to offer our space and use of other Agency resources in support of this program;

5) Presently, we feel we have recruited the kind of personnel this project would need--bright, committed, energetic, enthusiastic, and capable people who could move this project into an institutional framework and self-sufficiency.

We have not attempted to "hide" or sit back and rest on our past efforts as relates to VISTA and the Food Coop project. We have been open and honest in reporting project successes, accomplishments, as well as project deficiencies. We have, on the whole, enjoyed our relationship with ACTION/VISTA and respectfully request that you reconsider our proposal for VISTA volunteers for a third program year.

Sincerely yours,

Dawn E. Swan
Chief Administrative Officer

Shirley D. Simpson, Director
Community Development Division

rjh

cc: John Torian, Regional Director, Region I
Donald Wright, State Program Director
Audrey Thomas, VISTA Desk Officer

STATEMENT

of the

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS

ON

EXTENSION OF THE DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES

of the

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

UNITED STATES SENATE

APRIL 26, 1983

The American Association of Retired Persons welcomes the opportunity to submit testimony at the Subcommittee hearing on reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.

Our Association has long supported the concept of volunteerism. The government obviously has an important role in delivering services to older persons and others, especially those with limited income.

However, the federal government does not have the resources to assume this entire responsiblity.

We believe that there should be a three-way partnership to deliver services.

Individuals should be encouraged, to the maximum extent feasible, to obtain services from their own resources. This creates greater self-reliance and less pressure upon already strained public resources.

However, we must recognize that many Americans simply lack the financial wherewithal to purchase their own services. Moreover, some persons with sufficient income are denied essential services, for a wide variety of reasons.

For example, older Americans in rural areas may be without public transportation and other services.

In these instances, it is appropriate for the private sector and government to take steps to rectify this imbalance.

The Domestic Volunteer Service Act has helped to forge a stronger partnership between government and the private sector in responding to this need.

AARP believes that this legislation has served our Nation well and deserves to be continued.

A. THREE YEAR EXTENSION

First, AARP supports a three-year extension of the Older American volunteer program (Foster Grandparents, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and Senior Companions).

A three-year extension is vital to enable program administrators to plan their activities more effectively, and to provide greater continuity. This can avoid potential disruptive starts and stops or uncertainty caused by shorter-term extensions.

These programs have been in existence for several years. Their value and worth to the service recipients have been amply demonstrated.

For these reasons, we reaffirm that these programs deserve to be reauthorized for three years.

B. STIPENDS

Second, the stipends for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions should be boosted by 10 percent, from $2.00 to $2.20 per hour.

The existing $2.00 per hour stipend was established in the 1978 Older Americans Act Amendments, Public Law 95-478.

A 10 percent increase is necessary to compensate partially, and in a fiscally responsible way, the impact of inflation

upon the stipends for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions.

These individuals must have limited incomes to qualify as Foster Grandparents or Senior Companions. And, they should have protection from inflation.

C. AUTHORIZATIONS

Third, AARP supports authorization levels to permit a 10 percent stipend increase and to maintain, at a minimum, these programs at their current services levels.

We also urge the Subcommittee to approve an additional $12 million for Senior Companions to launch a home health care component. This measure is incorporated in S. 1129.

It would address a high priority need of the elderly. A significant proportion of all aged residents in nursing homes -- perhaps 15 to 40 percent -- are inappropriately or unnecessarily institutionalized.

Many of these individuals could remain in their homes if appropriate alternative care -- such as a home health aide or homemaker -- were available.

AARP also favors a three-year extension of VISTA. We recommend, at a minimum, an authorization consistent with the current appropriation, $13.7 million.

D. SUBPOENA AUTHORITY FOR ACTION DIRECTOR FOR AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS

We do have reservations about an Administration-backed measure to give the Action director subpoena authority for

audits and investigations.

We certainly understand the purpose of this measure. AARP has consistently supported measures to curtail fraud and abuse in all federal programs.

However, this proposal should be reviewed carefully, with an eye to developing a substitute.

Fraud and abuse must clearly be weeded out of federal programs, but without trampling individual rights. In addition, the powers granted to agency heads must be narrowly drawn to guard against potential abuse or harrassment by those in power or those who may come to power.

We do not believe that the conduct of Action's programs -- especially the older American volunteer programs -- warrants subpoena power for audits and investigations. Other alternatives are available to achieve the same objectives without the potential risks attendant with the subpoena authority.

E. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Action's volunteer programs have helped to deliver vital services to the elderly and younger persons.

AARP renews its support for:

-- A three-year extension for the older American volunteer programs and VISTA.

-- Authorized funding levels to maintain the current services for these programs, plus (1) a 10 percent boost in stipend rate for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions, and (2) a $12 million increase for Senior Companions to launch a home health care component.

We believe these measures are fiscally responsible and can help build upon early solid achievements.

Volunteer programs become all the more important now, especially since many government services have been trimmed back sharply or held in check in recent years.

For these reasons, we urge that these proposals be adopted.

OMRDD
STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

44 HOLLAND AVENUE • ALBANY • NEW YORK • 12229

ZYGMOND L. SLEZAK
Commissioner

May 9, 1983

The Honorable Jereiniah Denton
Chairman, Subcommittee on Family
and Human Services
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Denton:

On March 28, 1983, I wrote to you requesting an opportunity for this office to present testimony before the Subcommittee on Family and Human Services in regard to the decentralization of the Statewide Foster Grandparent Program grant overseen for 10 years by this agency.

It is my understanding that the hearings were held on April 22, 1983, and that oral testimony was understandably kept to a minimum. Since the subject of the OMRDD grant was raised in that hearing, I am submitting written testimony and requesting that it be placed in the hearing record so that the details regarding the treatment and transition of this grant by the ACTION agency will be clear and up-to-date.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Yours truly,

Zygmond L. Slezak
Commissioner

Encl.

STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
OMRDD
44 HOLLAND AVENUE • ALBANY • NEW YORK • 12229

ZYGMOND L. SLEZAK
Commissioner

Prepared by Ted Tuttey
FGP

March 28, 1983

The Honorable Jeremiah Denton
Chairman, Subcommittee on Family
and Human Services
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Denton:

It has come to my attention that the Senate Subcommittee on Family and Human Services will be holding a hearing on April 22, 1983, in regard to reauthorization of the Older American Volunteer Programs administered by the ACTION agency.

Since the ten year old Foster Grandparent Program Grant of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) was recently denied refunding by ACTION and decentralized to local sponsors despite much opposition and the lack of an adequate plan for transition, it would seem appropriate for this agency to present to the subcommittee the concerns and issues which this activity raises in regard to reauthorization of the Older American Volunteer Programs. We would also wish to suggest certain amendments to the Domestic Volunteer Service Act related to this matter, which we believe will strengthen opportunities for individual states to participate in Older American Volunteer Programs in a positive and effective manner.

I would, therefore, request an opportunity for OMRDD to present testimony at the April 22 hearing, as well as an opportunity to submit written testimony and documentation for the record as a follow-up to the hearing.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

12/4/83

Zygmond L. Slezak
Commissioner

Testimony Presented To:

United States Senate
Committee on Labor and Human Resources

Subcommittee on Family and Human Services

May 1, 1983

New York State
Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
44 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12229

Zygmond L. Slezak
Commissioner

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO:
UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The following testimony is given on behalf of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) by Ms. Barbara Hawes, Associate Commissioner for Statewide Services.

The purpose of this testimony is to share two major points:

-- a brief history of the ACTION agency's proposal and subsequent decision to decentralize New York State's long-standing, successful Foster Grandparent Program.

-- and the major consequences of ACTION's decision and subsequent lack of a suitable plan for decentralization of the OMRDD grant resulting in:

- loss of State resources
- increased spending of federal dollars for administration
- turmoil throughout the State for individual Foster Grandparents
- diminution of quality programming
- loss of valuable services to developmentally disabled children
- promises broken to Foster Grandparents.

HISTORY

In April of 1982, OMRDD had its first indication that it was to be singled out from all the other Foster Grandparent grants in the nation for "special treatment" when the Region II ACTION Director sent a Notice of Grant Award to OMRDD containing a 19% cut in federal funding.

The following points are essential in reviewing the significance of this decision.

- ACTION was late with the Notice of Grant Award and did not discuss its decision with OMRDD before the award was made. ACTION guidelines in effect at that time detailed procedures for awarding grants, and indicated that prior discussion should have taken place with the sponsor.

- No appropriate rationale for the cut was ever presented. Funds for the program nationally were not cut in the federal budget.

- The curious 19% cut meant that ACTION, under its regulations regarding denial of refunding, could avoid a hearing on the matter. ACTION regulations arbitrarily set a 20% or greater reduction as the point at which an informal meeting on the matter is required.
  the clear mandate of Section 412 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act that calls for appeal rights whenever a grant is reduced.

- ACTION attempted to make this cut based on a Policy on Grant Balances that was not yet formally in effect.

- This cut would have meant immediate lay-off of approximately 100 Foster Grandparents from the program.

- Disruption of the program occurred since no Notice of Grant Award was signed until three months after the beginning of the grant year. Funds had to be borrowed from a State account to continue Foster Grandparent stipends and services for those months during negotiations. ACTION later cited OMRDD for problems with stipend payments during this unsettled period.

- OMRDD successfully negotiated, with Congressional support, the restoration of the 19% cut, but for a limited eight month period.

On June 4, 1982, OMRDD was informed during a meeting with ACTION officials about finalizing the grant funding that ACTION was "predisposed" to the decentralization of the OMRDD grant. ACTION, from that point forward, embarked on a course of decentralization without regard to input from Congress, the Foster Grandparents themselves, or ACTION's own State grant manager.

On July 16, 1982, OMRDD received from ACTION a three page "proposal" for undertaking the complicated task of decentralizing the $1.2 million grant for 530 Foster Grandparents. OMRDD was amazed that such a serious matter had been given such little study.

The ACTION proposal was obviously lacking in detail and depth. OMRDD responded on August 15, 1982, with a set of questions and requests for information intended to initiate a dialogue regarding ACTION's proposal. Instead, ACTION responded that the questions were "irrelevant and immaterial." However, ACTION did allow OMRDD to submit a new grant proposal for continuation of the grant beyond the November 30, 1982, grant termination date.

That OMRDD grant application submitted on October 25, 1982, proposed that the entire federal grant of $1.2 million would be used for direct benefits to Foster Grandparents while all administrative costs could be assumed by the State. OMRDD offered to assume full responsibility for all administrative costs with State funds. This grant, much to OMRDD's surprise and with no pertinent discussion, was tentatively denied on November 19, 1982. Included in ACTION's tentative decision to deny refunding were nine citations of mismanagement which were not previously discussed with OMRDD and all of which were correctable if ACTION was truly interested in working cooperatively with OMRDD. ACTION subsequently reversed its earlier decision to terminate the OMRDD grant on November 30, 1982, and extended OMRDD's grant to February 28, 1983, to give ACTION an opportunity to find new sponsors.

OMRDD responded to each of the nine citations in a presentation given at Region II Headquarters on December 14, 1982, in New York City. Despite the documentation presented to refute ACTION's charges, a final decision to deny refunding was issued to OMRDD on December 30, 1982.

ACTION immediately called for grant applications from potential sponsors with a submission date of February 1, 1983. Unfortunately, OMRDD's grant management ended on February 28. On March 1, all arrangements for a transition to local sponsors should have been in place. ACTION, however, failed to notify new sponsors of their status until less than a week before the changeover in sponsorship was to occur. New sponsors were left with no time to make arrangements for a smooth transition, and with no cash in hand. OMRDD was left with a fragmented structure throughout the State, and Grandparents were left with no clear direction as to their assignments or their futures.

The results of the precipitous, poorly planned, and poorly executed transition are becoming clear. The tragedy is that the real effects will not be known until six months to a year from now. No new grant sponsor received a grant for longer than a five month period.

Some of the major consequences of ACTION's poor judgment and lack of adequate planning are hereby presented for your consideration:

1. ACTION has caused the loss of State resources previously provided through OMRDD. These resources would have continued to a great extent if OMRDD had been retained as the sponsor.

   ACTION was cautioned many times that if sponsorship was removed from OMRDD and placed in the hands of private grantees that a major portion of State resources would be lost to the Program. State Purposes funds allocated to OMRDD are not able to be used for local assistance to private agencies.

   With the removal of the Federal grant, certain State systems were also removed:

   - o staff assigned to coordinate the program;
   - o space, utilities, equipment and supplies used to support the program;
   - o indirect support provided by State departments;
   - o transportation, as well as meals and physical exams, particularly for the Foster Grandparents working in private community based agencies.

   Since agreements with all local sponsors are not yet in place, it is difficult to know the exact total of State resources which will be lost to the Program. However, we estimate at this time a loss of over 1 million dollars.

   ACTION has given a clear signal to all states by its activities in New York State that if states provide increasing amounts of support for the OAVPs, they are liable to lose their federal grant especially if those dollars are vested in staff support.

2. ACTION has increased spending of federal dollars for administrative costs in local sponsor grants, and will spend an additional one third of a million dollars, based on an analysis of new sponsors' federal cost benefit ratios, to maintain the same number of Foster Grandparents funded under OMRDD. An explanation of cost benefit rates will follow.

Because ACTION has carefully avoided granting any of the ten new sponsors in New York State any more than a 2 - 3 month grant, it is difficult to assess exactly how federal dollars will be spent on an annualized basis.

However, it is clear that ACTION is spending federal dollars on administrative costs that would, under OMRDD, have been used exclusively for direct benefits to Foster Grandparents. Specific examples are available from grant submissions.

It is also clear that an interesting statistic is emerging from some of the grants which have been made. That statistic is the amount per year spent on each Foster Grandparent in federal funds. It is called by ACTION the Cost enefit Ratio and is obtained by dividing the total federal dollars granted by the number of Volunteer Service Years assigned.

Under its last grant, the Cost Benefit Ratio for OMRDD was $2,285 per Foster Grandparent per year and that was reduced to $2,255 per Foster Grandparent in OMRDD's grant application of October 25, 1982.

For comparison, we have annualized the Cost Benefit Ratio of eight of the recent grants to local agencies:

Lewis St. Center (Rochester)	--	$3,083
New York City Department on Aging	--	$3,070
Lutheran Social Services (Jamestown)	--	$3,033
Livingston Co. Area Agency on Aging	--	$2,972
Oneida Co. CAP	--	$2,965
Troy-Rensselaer EOC	--	$2,935
Health Association Niagara Co. Inc.	--	$2,919

enefit Ratio is substantially less due to the same fact which kept OMRDD's federal costs low: the substantial provision of State resources.

Sunmount DDSO	--	$2,261
Broome DDSO	--	$2,361

OMRDD contends, based on the information so far available and on the statistics cited, that the ACTION agency will not only spend more federal dollars on administrative costs which would have been assumed by the State of New York had sponsorship remained with OMRDD, but that ACTION will, on an annualized basis, spend over 300,000 additional federal dollars to maintain essentially the same number of Foster Grandparents fielded under OMRDD.

To further compound this matter, ACTION has apparently failed to provide adequate federal resources to cover the costs of transportation for rurally based Foster Grandparents. While ACTION has spent additional federal dollars on staff salaries and other administrative costs of the new sponsors, Foster Grandparents are being denied transportation resources.

In letters to Congressmen, to Foster Grandparents, and to the Press, ACTION claimed that they would be able to increase the numbers of Foster Grandparents under local sponsorship with the same amount of federal dollars ($1.2 million) previously awarded to OMRDD which supported 530 Foster Grandparent slots. This has so far proven to be untrue. In fact, ACTION has instructed two sponsors to reduce their overall numbers after the first two months of funding, and has placed hiring freezes on other grants as well.

The issue must be raised as to whether or not this Committee feels that ACTION is following congressional intent in its handling of federal and state resources in this instance.

3. The entire project has experienced tremendous disruption fostered by ACTION's lack of careful planning and by the inexperience of new local sponsors to whom ACTION awarded grants by telephone on February 23 and 24--just a few working days before the transition was supposed to take place.

The only instance of smooth transition without disruption occurred where ACTION was compelled to fund local Developmental Disabilities Service Offices (DDSOs) in Binghamton and Tupper Lake, New York. These offices are part of the OMRDD system of services and they were able simply to continue the programs they had previously operated under the OMRDD grant.

However, in all other instances:

- transportation arrangements had not been put in place on March 1 by the new sponsors; OMRDD has assisted on an interim basis. However, some Foster Grandparents could not get to their stations on the first day and subsequent days because no transportation could be provided. This lack of transportation arrangements still exists in six programs where DDSOs are providing interim arrangements on limited resources which must eventually be terminated and the responsibility given to the new sponsors.

- Memorandums of Understanding had not been signed delineating responsibilities as of March 1. This continued in four of the eight programs operated by private agencies for over two months.

- Despite a last minute attempt by ACTION to tell Foster Grandparents to report to their volunteer stations, some Grandparents were confused because they did not have transportation, or they had to perform their responsibilities as volunteers since there was no agreement with the new sponsors as to continuation.

- Transfer of records and equipment was not carefully arranged and in fact ACTION did not provide appropriate direction for such transfers.

ACTION misinformed both the new sponsors and OMRDD as to how the transfer of equipment and personal files would take place.

- New project staff for these new agencies were not hired as of March 1; some sponsors were in fact still without staff in April.

Despite repeated requests from OMRDD over at least the past six months, ACTION never provided a comprehensive plan for the continuation of services under the local sponsors. A transition plan was never developed for anyone's use--for OMRDD, new sponsors, volunteer stations, or for Foster Grandparents. The transition was simply placed upon inexperienced new sponsors or four caretaker sponsors who never even applied for the grant, and who had no time to prepare for the myriad of details which must be worked out for a program such as this. Only because experienced OMRDD Foster Grandparent Program Staff maintained transportation and supervision as it had been, was complete disaster averted. Moreover, even after two months, arrangements of operational detail are still incomplete at many of the program sites.

In other words, the smooth running programs which were fully staffed by the State, providing services to over 1,200 developmentally disabled children in institutions and private agencies, are now reduced to basically starting over. The program quality that was built up over 10 years will suffer irreparable harm because of ACTION's unwise management of this whole situation.

Moveover, the disruption is bound to continue because ACTION has provided no more than 2 to 4 month grants to most of the new sponsors, which means that no sponsor can make long range plans at this time. Specifically, there are four caretaker sponsors who might not be continued as permanent sponsors. If they are not continued, and other permanent sponsors are chosen, there will be another period of disruption and uncertainty as another set of inexperienced sponsors and staff take over the program operation. The effects of such uncertainty and change are felt by volunteer stations (see attached letter) and staff but most of all by the Foster Grandparents themselves who have come to depend on the careful, stable operation of the OMRDD project and the close relationships with the local OMRDD Program Coordinators.

The quality of program operation is an issue which ACTION has consistently failed to address. Over the past two years, OMRDD has set a national standard for the involvement of Foster Grandparents in interdisciplinary treatment teams and the inclusion of Foster Grandparent activities in the overall, individual goal and activity plan for their clients. In fact, it was the OMRDD project which originally suggested this approach to ACTION administrators about four years ago. Recently, ACTION incorporated this concept into its own draft regulations and program operations handbook.

At all of the program components, great care was taken to see that Foster Grandparents followed client care plans, that they kept progress notes, and that they took part or were represented at team meetings regarding the client's progress. This took a great deal of staff supervision, monitoring, coordination, and training for the Foster Grandparents, all of which our

professionally trained staff provided. This aspect of quality programming is already on the wain under new sponsors. In most places, sponsors do not have plans in place for in-service training or monitoring of assignments. Indeed, plans for supervision are lacking since new staff have just recently been or are not yet hired. In most cases, the agencies selected as sponsors have little expertise or knowledge of service provision for the developmentally disabled.

5. Under ACTION's decentralization to local sponsorship, developmentally disabled children stand to lose Foster Grandparent services as emphasis is shifted to other types of children with special needs.

While fully aware of the need for Foster Grandparent services to meet a variety of needs, OMRDD is appalled at ACTION's willingness to shift Foster Grandparent resources away from the most vulnerable children with special needs, i.e., the severely and profoundly retarded with multiple handicaps.

ACTION's so called "new initiatives" are well known: drug abuse, illiteracy, runaway youths, juvenile offenders. It is perhaps not as well known that in its priorities distributed to regions, the developmentally disabled have been quietly dropped from the priority list. The President's Commission on Mental Retardation has called this to the attention of ACTION's Deputy Director Betty Brake.

During this transition to local sponsors, ACTION has given clear signals to the new sponsors that they may, after a short interim period begin to move Foster Grandparent resources into these new areas of service. In fact, one sponsor quoted ACTION officials in a recent news article as indicating that in the future, Foster Grandparents could be redistributed so that most of them would no longer serve the retarded at the local developmental center.

Moreover, this movement away from service of the developmentally disabled is already happening at sites where ACTION failed to provide enough resources to the new sponsor for the provision of transportation. New sponsors have been given permission to place Foster Grandparents who now serve at the local developmental centers in other types of volunteer stations. This has begun to occur at two centers where over 100 severely retarded children will be left without their Foster Grandparents.

ACTION has also built in the shift of Foster Grandparent resources away from the mentally retarded by naming all but two sponsors in counties other than the main county of location for the present program. In fact, some sponsors are 30 to 50 miles away from the sites where Foster Grandparents serve. It stands to reason that those sponsors will soon switch vacant Foster Grandparent slots to their own areas rather than continuing to serve mentally retarded children in areas remote from their own community.

6. ACTION's promises made to Foster Grandparents, OMRDD, Congress, Volunteer Stations, and the Press have not been fulfilled in this grant transition.

First and foremost, ACTION promised everyone involved that there would simply be a change in sponsorship but that all Foster Grandparents, all clients

served, and all volunteer stations would continue without change under new sponsorship.

joint regulatory responsibility to provide transportation resources. reported that this new sponsor has threatened Foster Grandparents with loss of their positions if they complain about this change in their assignments.

In Schenectady, the caretaker sponsor threatened to remove Foster Grandparents from the developmental center and met with each Foster Grandparent privately to convince them to comply with such moves. In Buffalo, the caretaker sponsor has been instructed to cut the Foster Grandparent rolls from 112 to 90 in the next four months. In Binghamton, where a hiring freeze imposed by ACTION is expected to eventually eliminate that small program, the DDSO was notified that in two months they must reduce their numbers from 9 to 7.

In a number of other places, DDSO Administrators have been told that they will lose Foster Grandparents if they fail to provide State resources for transporting Foster Grandparents. This threat has also been made in a recent letter from ACTION's Deputy Director to OMRDD and as indicated, the actual removal of Foster Grandparents from developmental centers is already occurring. In this letter, Mrs. Brake implies that the provision of transportation is the responsibility of the State, even though the State no longer manages the grant, has no rights to the vans purchased with grant monies, and in the midst of State fiscal constraints, can no longer provide van drivers and other resources. In addition, Mrs. Brake ignores the fact that no prerequisite exists for volunteer stations to provide transportation in order to have Foster Grandparents. In fact ACTION regulations are clear that it is the sponsor's responsibility to provide or arrange for transportation.

Secondly, ACTION promised that there would be no breaks in service. However, at a number of programs, Foster Grandparents were unable to serve because transportation had not been arranged. In at least three areas, there are still breaks in service occurring and there would be more except for the fact that DDSOs are providing transportation on an interim basis.

On March 1, over 100 Foster Grandparents experienced a break in service. Many more came in and signed up as volunteers because they were uncertain as to their official status.

Thirdly, ACTION promised Foster Grandparents that all their benefits would remain intact. This has not happened because local sponsors, not ACTION, determine benefit policies.

In one case, the new sponsor generously picked up Foster Grandparent leave accruals earned under OMRDD. Most have refused to do so. For instance, in one program under a caretaker sponsor, Foster Grandparents will receive no sick leave benefits. In at least five programs, Foster Grandparents will not be allowed personal leave days.

Again, the situations regarding sponsor denial of transportation to developmental centers is a denial of a specific benefit previously provided to Grandparents who served in these centers. In addition, one caretaker sponsor has not provided travel reimbursement to Foster Grandparents who drive, and has threatened non-payment of stipends to those who were absent because transportation was not arranged.

In summary, by decentralizing the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Foster Grandparent Program, ACTION has:

- made federal dollar expenditures less efficient
- caused the loss of major State resources to the Program
- spent federal dollars on administrative costs, which the State had previously paid, while failing to provide needed resources to directly benefit Foster Grandparents particularly in the area of transportation
- failed to increase volunteer opportunities
- chosen sponsors in a careless manner
- given no lead time for a smooth transition
- never developed a detailed plan for that transition
- diminished quality programming
- failed to keep its promises that there would be no breaks in service, that Foster Grandparents would continue as before in their same stations with their same children, and that Foster Grandparents would maintain present benefits intact.
- reduced a once smoothly operating, exemplary Program to disorganization, disintegrating the support systems which were in place.

The
Children's Hospital
of Buffalo

219 Bryant Street, Buffalo, New York 14222
716 878-7000

March 15, 1983

Mr. Ted Tottey
OMRDD
44 Holland Ave.
Albany, New York 12229

Dear Mr. Tottey,

I am the direct supervisor for the Foster Grandparents on the Infant Unit at Children's Hospital of Buffalo. I am writing to express my concerns about the change in sponsorship of the Foster Grandparent Program from OMRDD to the Health Association of Niagara County.

As of March 1, 1983, we were no longer under OMRDD and put under the direction of HANCI. The Memorandum of Agreement is going through our Hospital review process and as of yet has not been signed by our president. But our Foster Grandparents are registered as volunteers and are able to continue to work with our children on a volunteer basis.

Our contact with HANCI has been brief, but there are some problems I have with the new sponsorship. The first is the technicality of whether the Foster Grandparents can assume work as Foster Grandparents before the Memorandum of Agreement is signed. HANCI insisted that ACTION would cover the Foster Grandparents even though the Agreement hasn't been signed. I am not comfortable with trusting ACTION to assume responsibility if a situation arose. I also did not appreciate HANCI's attempts to convince me otherwise.

The second problem I have is HANCI contacting the Grandparents at their homes regarding the signing of the Personnel Information Releases. The Grandparents have been through enough without having the privacy of their homes invaded. This is something that should have been handled by contacting myself or Janet Walker, the hospital liason and letting us talk to the Grandparents.

In one of the phone calls, I was told by the Grandparent that HANCI was planning to make a site visit March 18, 1983 (even though the Agreement had not been signed). No attempt was made to contact myself or Janet Walker about the site visit.

The third problem and one that concerns me most is the decrease in benefits to the Foster Grandparents. They were originally promised no change in benefits, only to find out later there would be no paid sick time or personal leave. Elderly people have

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weaker systems making it harder to fight of possible infections. Working with children in a hospital setting exposes the Foster Grandparents to all types of possible infections. It is inevitable they will get sick and need time off. I do not feel it is fair to cause the Grandparents additional worries as far as losing their needed daily pay to live on because they are ill.

Working with OMRDD and more specifically the West Seneca Development Center, created a partnership genuinely interested in obtaining and offering the senior citizens the best working conditions possible. The program ran smoothly. If there were ever any problems, the West Seneca staff was there to help us through. West Seneca had a sincere interest and caring for the senior citizens and children served. I feel a great loss to the Foster Grandparent Program with having it taken away from West Seneca and OMRDD.

I am very apprehensive about being under the sponsorship of HANCI. Some of their dealings with us (as described in this letter), have been what I consider unprofessional and I feel a lack of personal interest in our Foster Grandparent Programs in Erie County.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my feelings and concerns. I know you will do whatever you can to provide our Foster Grandparents with the kind of program they deserve.

Sincerely,

Erica Hengerer

Erica Hengerer
Child Life Specialist

24-827 O—83——7

SENIOR COMPANIONS:
The Unrecognized Resource
For Long Term Care

Healthy and active senior citizens can be trained to use their natural skills as caregivers in ways that are age-appropriate, culturally relevant, innovative in specific situations, and cost effective; thus providing the key link in the continuum of care for the frail elderly. This human resource--older people themselves--has been overlooked by the long term care industry which has operated in accordance with a service economy concept implying that highly trained professionals must identify needs, design programs, and manage them for the benefit of the frail old. This concept leaves little room for the elderly other than as clients. This is a serious mistake.

Maggie Kuhn, convener of the Gray Panthers, offered this testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Aging Hearing on April 4, 1977:

> "Well-meaning staffs, who frequently act like bureaucrats, plan and administer programs for us, patterning their administration on the American management model. Old people are seen as clients for particular specialized services, not as a whole person with insights and wisdom to share. We find the process demeaning and calculated to make us wrinkled babies rather than mature, reasonable adults."

The Elderly as a Resource

The long term care industry could respond to this perception by allowing older people to participate in the structure of the newly emerging home health care field. We cannot merely transfer the attitudes, practices and hierarchies developed in the institutional-professional model epitomized by the skilled nursing facility; we must re-conceptualize ways to provide appropriate and affordable long term care which emphasize staying at home. We need to learn to use the abilities and experience of older people in conjunction with the skills and education of long term care professionals who have up to now been the sole source of care for the elderly.

The Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Select Committee on Aging after two years of research in their May, 1980 report, "Future Directions for Aging Policy: A Human Service Model" said,

> "Senior Americans now constitute the single most neglected human resource we have. Those who are functionally independent could swell the ranks of service providers at all levels of the care continuum--if they were reempowered...after all, who better knows the needs of elders (75+) than those who are senior adults (60-75).

It is time to translate this rhetoric which has become very popular conversationally into action in the long term care industry. We must reemploy older people and redirect their talents toward solving problems created by demographic trends, fiscal restraints, and over-professionalization.

The clear demographic trend is towards a population with more older people including a large number of healthy people over 60 who, because of good nutrition and advances in medical care, have the ability and the desire to continue to work. They usually prefer less hours than the traditional full time job, but nevertheless they remain able and eager to re-join the work force.

As the aged population increases, the segment with functional impairments--those in need of the services of the long term care industry--also increases. In projecting the numbers of those with substantial functional disability, we can assume that up to 12 million frail old folks will need some services in this decade. A March 8, 1983 Wall Street Journal article said,

> "A recent federal study found that if present trends continue, the $23 billion a year that it costs to support nursing homes today would more than triple to $76 billion by 1990."

We cannot affort to continue this approach and other ways must be developed.

Several investigations have found that older people when provided for in every detail, tend to become passive and withdraw from reality much as they would if left entirely alone. We must recognize, particularly with frail older

people, that we are not doing them a favor if we decide what's best for them. They are much better off if the choices are left up to them. Older people take greater comfort in being at home, among their familiar surroundings without medical and social service help even though they have physical discomforts and loneliness. We must explore the possibility of letting frail older people remain at home, receive medical care, and still make their own choices about living. We must allow older people to continue to take risks--denying them this human, ego-enhancing experience does not provide the security we intend. When an individual chooses security over accomplishment, then the security has some value. When the professional chooses security for a frail elderly client rather than giving him the choice, the security gained is likely to be neither sought nor appreciated. This was said well by Laurence Lane in an article, "Long Term Care: The Challenge from the 1981 White House Conference on Aging" from the Summer, 1982 issue of the Pride Institute Journal:

> "The worst conceptual error is to ignore the fact that safety and life preservation are sometimes at odds with independence, personal choice, and human dignity."

The Goal is Autonomy

What we are seeking then, is a compromise which allows older people to maintain their autonomy and stay at home; but which also allows them easy access to the myriad benefits of medical care and social services at a reasonable price. As the cost of nursing home care skyrockets and the nature of the care provided is questioned, long term health care professionals are looking at in-home care as a necessary element in long term care. We can predict that in-home care will continue to grow providing for a large proportion of all long term care clients. This trend also reflects the choice of most frail older people, who would much rather stay at home. But we must not merely shift our traditional health care mechanisms from institutions to the home.

It makes sense in every way, economically as well as in human terms, to use the energies, experience and age-empathetic skills of the healthy elderly to provide in-home care, friendship, and a link with services to the frail elderly.

Senior Companions are Key Link

One format has been in place long enough to be evaluated and has proven beyond a doubt that older people can provide the key link between frail old people living at home and the professional service provision industries: the Senior Companion Program. Created by the Federal Domestic Services Act of 1973, Senior Companions provide a stipended volunteer peer support system that is very efficient.

Documentation of the cost effectiveness and other benefits of Senior Companion Programs in California was recently presented to the California Department of Aging and the California legislature as the research component of a state demonstration project by ARMAC Management Systems, Inc., in November, 1981 entitled, "An Evaluation of the Senior Companion Programs in California". The summary said in part,

> "We found that the frail elderly are provided with an indespensable support system and companionship that is conducive to their health and overall well-being. The frail elderly reported that their Senior Companions have helped them to reduce their feelings of isolation, and contributed to their retaining independence within the community."

Senior Companions are older volunteers trained to provide personal support services and friendship to the most frail elderly, adding to the quality of their lives and allowing them to remain as independent as possible. These Companions are given the task of figuring out what their friends need. They can do so because they are usually of the same ethnic, socio-economic class, and age groups. Trained in the use of community resources, they coordinate a wide variety of support services with minimum bureaucracy and maximum individualization of services. Do we really need a nurse, a doctor, or a social

worker to tell us that the refrigerator is empty, that the roof needs repair, or that a letter needs to be written? Companions make these assessments and take care of the problems in a non-medical, non-professional manner--as friends.

Senior Companions are paid a non-taxed stipend for their work. They have the opportunity to function as knowledgeable, responsible, and healthy members of the community. They gain self esteem while learning the skills to remain independent and productive well into their own later years. What emerges is a network of friends and many clients, while frail themselves, find ways to help each other. The Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Select Committee on Aging said in their May, 1980 Report,

> "We do not accept the presumption that because professionals have gathered whole areas of expertise to themselves, they are the only ones capable of dealing with people effectively, especially in the human service area...We believe that many more services would be available in the community and to the community if this myth were disabused."
>
> "Professional service-giving, while appropriate in some settings, is not the only answer to social welfare problems...professional service-giving may foster dependency...peer helpers and replacements for missing parts of the natural support network are increasingly seen as more effective and less costly in a variety of situations."

These conclusions suggest that we need to work with senior citizens to create a long term care system that not only recognizes the resourcefulness of the elderly, but also emphasizes and promotes it. Many of our expectations of the elderly are somewhat self-fulfilling: if we expect deterioration rather than capacity, that's what we get. The long term care industry should re-orient itself to accepting and enhancing the capacities of the well old as stipended volunteers and also the frail old in need of help. The most frail can often be rallied to help someone they perceive as worse off than they are. This process raises their self esteem and capacity to do more for themselves. There are

limits to what frail elders can do, but Senior Companions have achieved remarkable success by working with--not just doing for the frail elderly in need of long term care. Companions are highly effective in giving frail elders a sense that they have someone to depend on while they remain at home. This helping hand extended by Companions encourages self esteem and participation by the frail older person in the process of improving his own condition. The Companion and frail client do things together as a team rather than as an expert telling the client what to do or just assuming that the task at hand must be done for the client.

Senior Companions maximize service and individual options because they allow the natural caregiver--a peer in age and life experience with possibly the same feelings of loneliness and isolation as the clients--to coordinate services rather than a professional on the staff of an institution. To demonstrate these benefits inherent in the Senior Companion approach for coordinating long term care services, the Elvirita Lewis Foundation developed a model Senior Companion Program in four demographically diverse California counties during the last six years. The model developed gives low income older people responsibility as Companions to keep an assigned group of frail elders independent as long as it is medically feasible to do so. Resources are made available to these Companion volunteers in the form of training by many experts--professionals such as physicians, psychologists, geriatric nurses, physical therapists, nutritionists, and social workers to name a few--who provide specific information and awareness of their own fields to the Companions. But reliance is placed on the natural life-skills of the Companion, his or her age-appropriateness, ethnic similarity, or empathetic abilities, and the assumption that the Companion will ask for assistance from the experts when a situation requires more complex or technical resources in a crisis intervention mode.

This approach is based on what has been called an "ownership model", articulated in a mental health setting in an experiment in 1956 in which state hospital aides were given the responsibility of working with the most severely impaired schizophrenics in the back wards of Topeka State Hospitals. Nick Colarelli and Saul Siegel wrote a book about their experiment, Ward H: An Adventure in Innovation in 1966 where aides were told to use their own intuitive responses and whatever innovative techniques they thought appropriate to get these patients out of the hospital. Psychiatrists, psychologists and nurses were available for consultation at any time; all possible resources were made available. The result of the four-year project was a high rate of discharge and a low rate of recidivism in a population that had been considered hopeless. Perhaps more interesting was the change in self-concept, productivity, and morale that developed in the aides. They were the effective agents for change; they were the ones with the know-how. The way these aides functioned, helping the impaired patients get out of institutions and on their own with some help is the prototype for what Senior Companions can accomplish. Colarelli and Siegel attributed the effectiveness of their project to the concept of ownership: if a person is given a specific, well-defined task and a limited number of people to work with, as well as the tools to perform the task, the likelihood of success is far greater. The person given the responsibility--in that case the aide, in our model the Companion--becomes personally involved and motivated to succeed and somehow this energy becomes available for innovative solutions specific to a particular patient/client.

There were many more aides than doctors or nurses in the Ohio State Hospital system. There are also clearly many more healthy elders interested in doing something useful rather than just entertaining themselves in lonely retirement than there are doctors, social workers and health care professionals.

Believing this basic premise, the Elvirita Lewis Foundation blended the use of the ownership model into the Senior Companion model.

We sought low income elders of many ethnic backgrounds, provided them with training in community, social and medical resources and aging support services, and finally assigned these trained Senior Companions to frail elders who needed help. The Program Director and other specialists were available at all times for consultation and support, but the task of keeping the clients at home and out of institutions was given to the Companions. We felt that older people would accept assistance more readily from their own peers, an idea substantiated by research in aging: "Age Preferences for Professional Helpers" by Ernest and Jerome Furchtgott published in the Journal of Gerontology in January, 1981; and "An Evaluation of the Senior Companion Programs in California" by ARMAC Management Systems, Inc. This research showed how networking of older people with other older people would develop a sense of community that would retard passivity and isolation and raise self esteem; that the frail elderly could tolerate substantial physical discomfort as long as they were living at home with someone to look in on them; and that reports of pain were often symptomatic of isolation rather than signs of intolerable physical discomfort. Finally, we felt that certain ethnic communities had traditions or practices as they aged that might be enhanced by having an older person of that ethnic group available to them. All of these assumptions have been substantiated by the ongoing efforts of our Companions.

Senior Companions have shown many capacities, regardless of little education or economic class constraints; and have become skilled at keeping their friends at home as well as writing about their experiences. Careful but informal records are kept of the activities and observations of our Senior Companions

which are useful in understanding how the program works. To maintain privacy for Companions and clients, fictitious names are used here; though the words are precisely their own, taken from excerpts of reports submitted to the Companion Director since 1977. Companion Grace writes:

> "One night, very late, I received a phone call from a male nurse at one nursing home who after many apologies asked, 'Mary, what do you do with the three clients you visit here? They are the only sane patients in the ward.'"
>
> "I thought about it and the only explanation I have is that I oriented my people when they were admitted. I removed thier fear, giving them insight into a dehumanized institution in an honest and realistic fashion. I instilled courage in them to remain secretly independent in a place where independence is destroyed the first day. I taught them to be aware of every minute, in a situation where night and day drift together and time changes with the change of staff. I taught them to evaluate their nurses; how to ask for help without irritating the overworked, underpaid and often uneducated employees who can punish if irritated. Above all, I gave my clients a very limited goal to work for and absolute hope and faith that one day they would be ready to go home."
>
> "Although I have had limited experience in institutions of this kind, of the ones I am familiar with, the following is common: Fear grips the person who enters the convalescent hospital where all vestiges of privacy are removed, where nurses often talk to patients in an infantile or threatening manner, where complaints and angry pleas for answers that never come turn into crying, shouting and screaming and are then interpreted by staff to be signs of derangement and are literally diagnosed as such. They are given sedatives and within a few weeks I witnessed healthy angry souls become docile and whimpering beaten puppies."

Mary continues, discussing her clients who are at home:

> "I found that I somehow returned to them an inner dignity and pride that they lost because of ill health, loneliness and poverty. I showed them several alternatives they could use in satisfying their simple needs. I helped them to see themselves as unique individuals in the eyes of men and God. I guided them in practical ways to ask for help. I taught them about services for senior citizens. I instilled in them faith and hope and the courage to dream for a better life."
>
> "I believe that everyone I visited became a less helpless person, more aware of the real world in which he lives, and less afraid."
>
> "In finishing, let me relate to you about a 95-year-old lady I was asked to befriend. I met her at the Senior Center at lunch time. The younger seniors around her would tap her on the shoulder and

> flatter her foolishly, remarking how wonderful it is that she is still alive at 95 years of age. She would nod imperceptibly, act resigned, and everyone assumed that she was almost deaf. As we started to converse, I was surprised that she heard so clearly. Her eyes opened wide; her face became animated and happy. I, of course talked to her on an ageless level. Within a month's time her whole demeanor changed. Her body straightened. She was smiling most of the time. She seemed to hear everyone and at the lunch table she entertained us with her fabulous experiences. Very slowly the whole attitude toward her of the other seniors changed. She was no longer the stereotype. She became one of the colleagues at the table. I feel very proud having this experience."

Often we are asked how we find those in need--the lonely and dispossessed elderly. Millie, who is 75 herself relates how she as a Companion provides outreach service:

> "I talk to them on the malls, at bus stops, at convalescent hospitals, and senior centers. So many folks are milling about, feeling in need of a friend and welcoming a friendly chat with someone who'll take the time to be friendly. I recall the old man with the sunburned head and face because someone had stolen the only hat he owned and he couldn't get another one until his pension check caught up with him..."

Millie borrowed a hat for him and in doing so, introduced him to another older man who lent the hat. Now they fish together almost every week. The fish they catch are distributed throughout the network by Millie and other Companions.

Another Companion, Sarah, writes about her clients:

> "Joy is in a nursing home with a broken hip. I took her for a ride around the Cliff Drive and passed her home. She couldn't thank me enough for the outing, hadn't been out of the hospital in a year. She said, 'I feel like I've been released from jail!' I feel good helping. We will work together to get the doctors to let her come home."

> "Martha, who lives alone in a small shack overlooking a strawberry field is 87. She seemed in a pretty good mood today. She said her granddaughter was trying to talk her into going to a rest home and she said, 'No way, as long as I can care for myself and I can with your help!' I told her I'd do all I can to help her."

> "Margaret is still in pain, but her doctor says she can go to her son's home for 48 hours. She doesn't want to go because she has nothing to take to her grandchildren. So I told her please go and I'll get gifts for the children. Will call her son and see what boys of 12 and 10 and a girl of 8 years could use!"

Companion, Wanda, who is 83, talks about a few of her clients:

"I took Mr. Fino bowling with Mr. Johnson. He had fun and a pretty good score. He does well for having to bowl out of a wheel chair, and left-handed as well. He was a naturally right-handed man."

"I visited Uncle Ted, 102 years old. I took some grapes and peanut brittle which he loves. Some music was playing and he wanted to waltz, so I danced with him."

"Took Mrs. O to the store again. She really needs someone to go with her--she cannot see the products, and cannot read the prices. I found she is more blind than I thought. She sure is a good one to fool you--PRIDE. She is one of the most remarkable persons I've ever met. I admire her so very much."

"Carlotta had hurt her back. She was home alone and fell. She said she had no one to come to see her in the hospital but me. I carried her some flowers that Lily [another client] grew by her trailer. She said, 'You will never know how much I thank you for giving me flowers while I can smell them, just to know you cared.' She cried. So did I."

As interest has increased in the Senior Companion capacity networking model of long term care in Washington, D.C., several questions were raised by legislative and administrative staff, particularly regarding the issue of proper case management techniques. Using the context of the Senior Companion model, we defined case management as essentially figuring out what a client needs and getting those services to him in a comprehensive package so the client is sustained, yet remains independent. All too often, without a Companion, older peoples' needs are handled on a piece-meal basis--some needs remaining unmet, others inappropriately addressed.

Given this definition, the most important elements of case management for elder clients are empathy and common sense. Common sense is clearly the strong point of the older volunteers who are Senior Companions. The following list outlines the procedure Senior Companions use in being a friend and coordinating services:

- The Senior Companion listens to and carefully observes his client. In this way, he learns of the client's verbalized needs and the equally important unspoken needs which may also be crying out for attention.

- The Companion gets the permission of the client to proceed with addressing his needs--this responding to a request rather than just doing for, raises client self-esteem and initiates client participation in their own "case". If the Companion can directly help the client, he does. If help is needed,
- the Companion then notifies the appropriate agency, professional, or institution of his client's need for a specific service or services.
- An evaluation is then made by that agency, professional, or institution to determine what specific responses should be taken. The Senior Companions know they are not doctors or social workers and don't attempt to be. They call doctors and social workers for help when needed.
- After the evaluation, the Companion follows up by asking the client if he received the service. The Companion also checks back with the agency, professional or institution to see that promised services were in fact provided.

In this situation, case management is being done by the Companion in conjunction with professionals. The common sense approach taken by these non-professional but strongly empathetic older people is particularly appropriate for Senior Companion clients--home-bound, frail, lonely older people. There are hundreds of instances where the friendly help of Senior Companions makes clients feel more secure in their homes and improves the quality of their clients' lives.

Senior Companion, Josephine, 68. writes:

" I called on Mr. Jones to see how he was. He said he had the flu. We checked his temperature--he didn't have one. I have a big-number thermometer so we could read it easily. He said no matter how he felt, he had to go out and feed his cows. But he said he was very glad I called on him. It made him feel much better to know someone cares if he lives besides his cows."

"I visited Lucy in the convalescent hospital. She wasn't feeling too good--complained of a headache. The nurse told me that it's a hunger headache because Lucy wouldn't eat. The next day I took her a home cooked meal. She ate it all. The nurse and Lucy both thanked me."

"The city of Santa Cruz has a free "Clean Up" program once a year. My client, with a broken back, was worrying how she could get all of her mess bagged up and out to the curb for pick-up. This is

how we worked it out: she just sat in her chair and pointed out the things she didn't want. I had asked around and found two neighbors who were willing to help. When we were through and counted, there were 22 bags--the 90 year-old neighbor counted them--how's that for senior power!"

The Senior Companions' approach of asking if older people want services has opened new vistas for the frail home-bound elders. A well-meaning expert often assumes that older people in need want the service because it is available and has been designed for them--this is not always so. Senior Companion Irene writes:

"I discovered that Mary, 90 years old, is not interested in the talking books for blind people she was provided. No one asked her. The recordings just started arriving. She did want a grab bar in her shower and someone to talk to and to have to dinner. I contacted the Senior Home Improvement Program and an elder carpenter installed one right away. I called the shut-in call service and now they call her every morning. I took the tapes back to the senior center and introduced Mary to two other ladies in her neighborhood."

Sometimes with some people it is very hard to remain considerate. In institutional situations, a recalcitrant patient is severely dealt with. They may be tied to their bed or wheelchair or sedated into oblivion. Companions try to help regardless of personal quirks or resentments by clients. Lulu writes:

"Zelda and I took our usual Monday morning trip to the supermarket. It is difficult to choose a subject to talk about with her--everything seems to irritate her. But I know she counts on me to listen to her tirades--perhaps it does her good to be able to complain to someone. I know she's very lonely..."

Often sharing living quarters or sharing common interests fulfills the frail elderly more than social service approaches. Senior Companion Emily writes about an older man and woman both in their 80's that she introduced:

"Now they live together and share meals and groceries. He is divorced. He plans to go back to the old country someday, but now he is happy to have someone like him who understands him and his customs."

She writes about some of her other clients:

"I took her to Twin Lakes Church where she put an ad on their bulletin board for a roommate. She loves children and like so many elderly, misses their exuberance and life. She said she wished she could get someone with a child to live with her."

"They met each other through the program and fell in love and decided to get married. I arranged to have the wedding at another client's mobil home. One client baked a beautiful cake and provided a red rose center piece, a lace table cloth, and silver. Other clients attehded the wedding. One was the best man. They all had a wonderful time. The best man later took the party to the races. He bet on his favorite horse. The horse won and they all got their pictures taken in the winners' circle."

In every case we have seen (the model program has helped over 1,500 frail older people), Senior Companions make whatever the situation is more bearable--sometimes through laughter and other times through empathetic tears. Companions become true friends of their clients. They make efforts to create networks, linking frail clients with one another, with social services, and with businesses in their community. The Companions become the day-to-day, week-to-week case managers with oversight from professionals.

One of the main elements of Senior Companion case management is balancing the needs of several clients with the Companion's time, and with other support systems. A Companion may spend two hours with a client on a particular day, without accomplishing all that was needed. Even though that client has no alloted time the following day, the Companion may still visit him to resolve additional needs. For instance, the Companion might visit the client to help him write letters and pay bills, and find that he also needs to have shopping done. Or the client may be particularly depressed on one occasion, and require more time than on another visit.

If the Companion is unable to resolve a problem, he calls on the supervisor. The supervisor reviews the situation and makes recommendations to the Companion or suggests that a particular professional be asked to review technical, medical or legal matters. Those situations which call for a professional opinion should definitely end up in the hands of a professional.

A strong point in favor of Companions providing case management is that they are in direct, daily contact with clients. On the front line of problem solving, they are in the best position to determine, without invading the clients' privacy, whether the solutions in place are in fact resolving their problems.

On-going training is another element that makes this format for Companions work as well as it does. First of all, Companions are selected as volunteers on the basis of their common sense and life experience. Secondly, they are given 40 hours of comprehensive training before they begin their work. Third, their on-going training continues at bi-monthly meetings where professionals discuss specific problems with Companions or relate technical information relative to specific issues. Trainers have included psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and other social service administrators and medical professionals. All of these professionals are networked to the program as on-going resources at no cost to the Companion program for donated consulting efforts. The Senior Companion network is effective because the team includes as resources the frail old, the well creative old, and long term health care professionals.

Benefits and Drawbacks

Senior Companions provide the following benefits:

- The frail elderly served--a population of increasing impairment--can be maintained in the comfort and dignity of their own homes;
- The Companions become community resources, functioning in new ways, solving community problems and remaining self-supporting. Many of these low income elders undergo transformations in confidence, competence, and appearance as they receive the respect and interest of new segments of the community;
- The community can provide services in the areas of the greatest need, and agencies can become responsive to ethnic groups and isolated people who are unaware of the benefits offered by the social service system. The truly needy are served--not just those who know how to "work the system". Asians, Hispanics and other ethnic groups can appropriately serve their own people;

- Institutionalization of frail elders may be deferred, shortened, or eliminated at a substantial savings of tax dollars;

- A positive cost/benefit ratio can result from the reduction of public funds spent on inappropriate social services for the elderly. Expensive professionals are used only for training and for emergency or highly defined services rather than for activities that a Companion can do as well or better.

The only significant drawback which has so far come to light has been an increased risk for some of the most frail. They do fall at home and a few have broken bones as the personal price to pay for being at home without constant supervision, but most older people prefer a broken bone to the alternative of the loss of freedom they'd have living in a skilled nursing facility. It should also be noted that falls and broken bones are not uncommon in nursing homes either.

The program has been faulted by some for not having more formal or clinical data kept on clients. Some professionals have expressed concern that old people with little formal education cannot keep up with real case management. They point out that Companions don't use appropriate jargon or misuse technical language. It seems when we look at the results, that these drawbacks are really part of the benefits of the innovative Senior Companion format. Do your friends or mine keep detailed data on us? Wouldn't we feel they had invaded our privacy if they did? Are big words more important than humane and dignified treatment?

Dear Laura, our first Senior Companion (recruited in 1977) is described by a friend in her eulogy:

> "She was a delightful little lady wearing pink nail polish, pink shoes and a pretty little dress. She was so loving and caring that she ended up recruiting 6 more Companions, kept more than 25 people out of nursing homes, and lived with several of her clients so that she could give them more care on her own time. She would sit next to withdrawn, unpopular old people at the senior center--those who no one else would be near--and she would draw them out, bring them a plate of food, be their friend. She'd bring other Companions and clients to visit her clients and was a genuine angel of mercy and human kindness. She was so sick with diabetes toward the end of her life that she would carry a little bottle of orange juice wherever she went to sip on if she felt sick or lightheaded.

> She didn't want to stop working and fought to keep taking care of her beloved friends. Her body finally let her down, however, and she died at 72--all the while believing she would get better and help her dear clients to believe in themselves too."

There are many more like Laura in every town and neighborhood in the United States. If we can harness their energy, dedication, and perspicacity, we will have made a properly humane and cost-effective system of long term care.

Summary

Laura and the other elders in the program have demonstrated that Companions are one of the best coordinators of networking activities--linking frail older people together to help and sustain each other. A frail older person can read a story on the phone to a blind older person. Another frail older person can gather flowers or vegetables from his small garden plot to give a frail elderly friend in the network. Companions provide a good example to their frail friends by engaging in activities in support of one another in which the self esteem of all is improved. We have used professionals as key participants in this system, but as trainers and emergency care givers rather than as providers of all services. Trained Companions have demonstrated assesment skills in such areas as drug dependence; nutrition; exercise; mental health; indications of illness; available community resources; possibilities for work, education, and group participation; the natural processes of aging; networking; and determining with clients a variety of options as aging processes continue. With older people trained to do the immediate first-line contacts, professionals are freed to handle the more complex situations, the inter-agency referrals, and the research and information dissemination which will enhance knowledge in the field of aging.

The Senior Companion model uses older persons who are a renewable resource. The Companion learns new skills, new responsibilities, new competencies. He or she is retired to rather than from useful activity--recycling human experience rather than wasting it.

The Senior Companion model discourages feelings of dependency in favor of accenting independence in all aspects of life. It encourages independence by using all the available skills of the client population in assisting one another through a network of friends, and by giving responsibility for care and minimal supervision to the Companions. It allows for options, choices, and activities that make people feel alive and human. Feelings of apathy and powerlessness in both the young-old and old-old are diminished, with benefits in the form of improved health and longevity for all participants.

Long term care professionals should embrace the Senior Companion model and seek to duplicate it in every community. We should support increased federal and state funding for Senior Companions through the ACTION agency. Also, we need to develop more interest in the private sector in providing in kind help like office space, desks, and phones as well as funding to local Senior Companion efforts. Today there are just over 70 Senior Companion programs across the United States. Only one has substantial support from the business community. All need this kind of help. If we nurture Senior Companions, they can encourage the frail elderly to help themselves and all of us will benefit.

Call your local Senior Companion Program to start helping. If you don't have one in your community, start one. For information write: ACTION in Washington, D.C. or the Elvirita Lewis Foundation; 5905 Soquel Drive #100; Soquel, California 95073.

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May 20, 1983

Dear Joe,

Hi! I hope my greetings find you healthy and happy.

Today is graduation day. It is also a time for remembering those who have been an important part of my life — you are one of those special people. The value of my Vista experience was enhanced by your guidance. You displayed sincerity and dedication towards those less fortunate than the general population and a willingness to make a system work for people rather than support a system for its own sake. The health care delivery system is also self-serving at times and, as a vital part of that system, I am determined to make it work for and benefit people and not just administrators' pocketbooks.

Joe, I love nursing. I feel so satisfied and fulfilled helping people live and die comfortably. Physical care is only one aspect of my work. As a nurse, I am also involved in teaching, problem solving with patients and their families, assisting in psychological and social adjustments. Advocacy — that's something you are practicing every day in your role as Vista supervisor and something you taught me while I was your Vista volunteer. Patient advocate — that's what I am, that's what I'm good at, thank you Joe.

Have a pleasant day. Love and lovely things for you and your family Joe.

Sincerely,
Paula Havelick
your former vista volunteer + vista volunteer at heart forever.